MARK SYKES

HIS LIFE AND LETTERS

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SHANE LESLIE

Sykes, Sir Mark, bart., 1870-1919

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MARK SYKES

SIR MARK SYKES

MARK SYKES: His Life and Letters

By SHANE LESLIE

With an Introduction by

THE RIGHT HON. WINSTON CHURCHILL

With Portrait
and Thirty Cartoons
by Mark Sykes

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INTRODUCTION

By the Right Hon. WINSTON CHURCHILL

The Great War was made tragic by the loss of many young men whose feet had hardly touched the first rung of their careers. From that soaring ladder which is so thickly thronged at the base, thousands were swept by their own act of sacrifice before they had drawn themselves a head clear of their fellow-men. Of those fewer, but still many, who fell from assured positions, some had as young men reached the distinction of the House of Commons. Prominent among them was the subject of this Life, who refused ministerial office during the war, and who if he had lived would in all probability have reached the Cabinet.

Of the young men who made their way to the fore after service in the Boer War, none set out with a more determined and original programme than Mark Sykes. Though surrounded by every luxury and every temptation to lead an idle, pleasant country life, his fancy turned to the desert rather than to the moors, to travel rather than to sport, to some piece of Imperial service single-handed in the unknown East rather than to the enjoyment of the home duties of a country gentleman.

He was a unique product. His parents gave him the advantage of a public school education in sparing *and sporadic instalments, with the result that his originality was never cramped, and he afterwards enjoyed a University career without becoming a slave to the conventions which it not infrequently implants in susceptible youth. He failed to acquire the standing of a Master of Arts, perhaps because he was really proficient in so many of them. The art of conversation he had inherited from his brilliant mother; the art of drawing he was wont to practise to the delight of his friends. He wielded an able and a facile pen. The art of public speech was his, and by the combination of his matter and his manner he could hold the ear of the House of Commons when he spoke on such different subjects as the Near East, the Territorials, the Dramatic Censorship, and Ireland. He spoke wisely and temperately on questions of religion, and he might well as the years passed by have represented the Catholic element in the higher counsels of the nation as ably and wisely as Lord Ripon, another Yorkshire Squire.*

Filled with the adventurous spirit which was abroad after the Victorian Jubilee and led so many into African or American adventures, Mark Sykes betook himself to travel in the Near East without any hope of finding treasure or any desire to change the religious views or territorial ownership of those amongst whom he wandered. He acquainted himself with the Levantines and the Palestinians, and even more with the Arabs and the Turks. He went where few if any had ever been before, and mapped out roads and countries which neither the War Office nor the Royal Geographical Society with their combined knowledge could cover or *compass. These were years of patient and arduous work, during which he laid out his intellect and his income on what might have seemed sterile soil. He was determined to make himself a first-class authority on his chosen part of the world, and the issue of his original and vivacious books kept his progress before those among his fellow-countrymen who were capable of appreciation. Though never widely read and now out of print and unobtainable, his books contain passages which English writers as well as travellers may be proud to read.*

When this long novitiate of travel ceased, he looked to Parliament. There seemed at first to be a whimsical quality about his ability which impeded his progress. The currents of party fighting were adverse, and he was twice unsuccessful in his own county constituency. He was eventually elected for Hull.

But the war was now very near. In the few years that intervened he established his position in the House of Commons as a good speaker with an earnest and original mind. Then came the explosion which was to cut short so many unfolding careers in their period of brightest promise. He was clearly marked out for service in the East. He became an invaluable factor in all that intricate and remarkable policy which split the Arab from the Turk, divided the Moslem world at a most critical juncture, and eventually furnished important forces on the desert flank of Allenby's armies.

He became increasingly employed in the inter-allied questions about the Middle East arising out of the victory. He could certainly have occupied, had he *so desired, a considerable official position in the Parliament of that day. He had in fact reached that point and situation in life when all the years of preparation are over and when the promise of mature action has begun. At this moment he was struck down. He leaves behind a memory precious to his friends, and a record of energetic and disinterested service to his country worthy of the great period in its history to which he lived to contribute.*

WINSTON CHURCHILL.

TO

EDITH SYKES

This Record, imperfect as all Records are, of
one who, as men come and go, was singularly
perfect, upon whose soul be peace.

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MARK SYKES

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY

IN the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1879, and of the Hegira of the Prophet 1296, and on the eve of the Feast of St. Patrick, an only child was born to Sir Tatton Sykes, Baronet, of Sledmere, in the county of York, and to Jessica Christina, his lawful wife. Mark Sykes was this only son, and he always remained the original child of original parents. Mark was born a Londoner, but at the age of a month he was brought to Sledmere and baptized in the adjoining church by the vicar, Mr. Newton Mant. It was a Low Sunday in April, and the church was crowded with loyal tenants and waiting Woldsmen, to whom the solemn christening of an heir to Sledmere was in its rare recurrence not to be accounted among merely minor feasts of the Church as by law established. The ceremony took place in the old church, before its gorgeous restoration at Sir Tatton's expense; and the doors of the old house, before it had been gutted by fire, were thrown open to all who wished to mark the day. Among the many who drank the health of the newly baptized, few could have dreamed or wished that he should do otherwise in coming years than become as model a squire as his father and grandfather, and as worthy of the line of Yorkshire worthies to whom he would eventually succeed.

Hitherto the Sykes family had produced worth rather than fame. They were descended from a Daniel Sykes who moved from Leeds to Hull in the reign of Charles II. The son of Daniel married an heiress, Mary, the daughter of Mark Kirby, who remotely supplied Mark Sykes with his Christian name and the democratic satisfaction with which he claimed that as "the descendant of a mayor of Hull, who invested the proceeds of tallow, hemp and Baltic coast produce in enclosing, planting and cultivating, I cannot feel superbly feudal." Richard Sykes, while trafficking in the Baltic, was able to render service to Peter the Great, the first Tsar to set eyes on the sea, and presentation pictures of Tsar and Tsarina remain as heirlooms at Sledmere to this day. Sledmere, the "sludge-pool," was the barren and watery heritage which Miss Kirby brought into the Sykes family. The Sykeses were no Saxon churls, but Nordic seamen prepared to make wealth, not only off the waves of the North Sea, but out of the even more desolate Wolds, which had not changed character since the Conquest. Mark Sykes expressed his view of his race in a typical letter to Professor E. G. Browne soon after the Russian fleet had played skittles with the Hull fishing boats (March 8, 1907): "I am not an Anglo-Saxon, but a Woldsman, consequently a pirate; we came from the North Sea, we did, and we have always been the same. We massacred and destroyed all the wretched flint-making people and drove them off the Wolds, and now they live between York and Selby. We call everyone a *giaour* and a foreigner who lives beyond a twenty-two-mile radius of this house. Our men are tall and have dark hair and fair moustaches, and we are all pirates. Come and buy a horse or sink our fishing boats, and the price or indemnity we shall get out of you will astonish you! My dear sir, at Erzingian you will find a Turkish army cloth factory, and behold on the machinery is inscribed Briggs, of Huddersfield. Briggs is a Wold name. We are not money-makers, like the Yalmeli, but seizers and snatchers, like our forefathers who came here."

The Sykeses were not content with sticking in the thick clay like the aboriginal peasants. Their sense of adventure and achievement drove them to enclose the Wolds, build roads and cut out farms, plant trees and plough the unending wastes, which sloped upwards and inland towards the hills overlooking York, and in the opposite direction spread into the North Sea, out of which they had come. They took also to civilized ways, and Richard's son Mark became an ordained cleric. His son, again, Christopher, was returned as Member for Beverley, and when Pitt came to reward him for his services he asked that his father might be raised to the baronetage. So Sir Mark Sykes was the first clergyman to be created a baronet. To honour their fathers and live long days in the Wold became a tradition of the family. The estate was a fine and prosperous one of thirty-four thousand acres, and in 1784 the great house was built, "the last gasp of English architecture." Christopher was succeeded by the second Sir Mark, who acquired fame for his wager of fifty pounds down that if Napoleon lived after a certain date he would forfeit a pound a day. The wager was declared void as against the public interest. Sir Mark collected a wonderful library of Elizabethan plays and poems which, could it have been kept for a century, would have proved the richest of investments. His successor, known as the "old" Sir Tatton, found it necessary to make a choice between his hounds and his books, between his literary treasure and the famous pack branded with his S. While he made the decision the anxious old huntsman stood outside the library door. A gentleman could forgo his books, but not his hounds, and the library was sold in 1832 for over ten thousand pounds. Of "old" Sir Tatton it was said that there were three things worth seeing in Yorkshire: York Minster, Fountains Abbey and the Old Squire. He was a boxer of renown, who had taken lessons from "Gentleman" Jackson, and he also bred sheep and blood-stock, laying the foundations of the finest stud farm in England. He bred the Derby winner St. Giles, and he saw the St. Leger (the Yorkshire Derby) run no fewer than seventy-four times during the long term of his life, which only came to an end in 1863. He attained a patriarchal dignity, and his very portrait in oils reverberates good health and common sense. He was a glorified John Bull and full-blown flower of Yorkshire squirearchy.

His son, locally known as "the late Sir Tatton," was the father of the subject of this book. Improvement in travel was bringing the Sykeses, with many another provincial family, within the orbit of the Metropolis. "My grandfather," wrote Mark, "used to ride to London in seven days. My father drove there in two, as a boy, and I go there in four hours."

If four hours sufficed Mark for a train journey to London, less than four years accomplished his theological journey to Rome. Before he had reached the age of doubt or reason, faith or discrimination, all was happily resolved for him by Lady Sykes. With the approval of Cardinal Manning she suddenly carried her difficulties and opportunities, her hopes, her child and herself into the Catholic fold. An extract from the log-book of the London Oratory indicates the important effect on the infant Mark, who, with the Duke of Norfolk for godparent and Father Charles Bowden as ministrant, was unwittingly received into the Faith which he so valiantly defended in years to come against the hosts of heretics and scoffers.

> Die 16 Martii 1879 natus et die—a ministello heretico baptizatus est Marcus Sykes filius Tatton et Christinæ Mariæ Jessicæ Sykes olim Cavendish-Bentinck conjugis; die 25 Novembri 1882 prædictus infans ad ecclesiam portatus est et ceremoniæ ei adhibitæ sunt a me Carolo Bowden Cong. Orat. Presb. Patrinus fuit Henricus Dux Norfolciæ Matrina fuit Maria Carolina Talbot.

Mark wot nothing of the ceremony, his mother used to recall, until he found the salt of baptism smarting in his mouth and cried loudly. She had thoroughly appreciated the intellectual reasons for her act, which was not a piece of feminine sentiment, for her brain was always masculine in its processes and decisions. She used, however, to attribute her conversion on the mystic side to the fact that her great-grandfather, Charles Powell Leslie, had voted in the Dublin Parliament against the Act of Union, and thereby secured a larger share of Divine favour to his posterity than if he had acted otherwise.

Sledmere was such a centre and institution as would have appealed to the author of "Coningsby." Here the old order survived and increased. Approached by long, straight roads and sheltered by belts of woodland, surrounded by large, prosperous farms, Sledmere lay like a ducal demesne among the Wolds. Against the great beech trees, outside the walls and gates ornamented with the heraldic triton of the Sykes family, rose a reproduction of an Eleanor Cross, sixty feet in height, carved with Gothic adornment, set since by Mark with the painted images of the Virtues and pointed with a jewelled emblem of the Christian faith. Within the walls rose the mighty four-square residence and the exquisite parish church. Outside, again, stretched the fields and buildings of the stud-farm, where was collected some of the best bloodstock in England. Twice the fine old English gentleman was to achieve the blue riband of English breeding and rear a Derby winner. As Spanish families count their Velasquez and Italians prize their contributions to the succession in the Papacy, so Englishmen recall their Derby triumphs; and be it remembered in all account or reckoning of the Sykes family that Doncaster and Spearmint were bred on Sir Tatton's acres. Whether Sledmere bred horse or man, they were bred well.

Sledmere, the ancestral home in which father and son had so little time to live, thanks to the lust of wandering agitating their minds to the exclusion of ordinary desires, was a perfect instance of "An English Gentleman's House in the Eighteenth Century," as Mark described it: "There is priceless furniture, mantelpieces, Adam ceilings. The park, with the inevitable temple, the gingerbread Gothic castle, father of Scott and Pugin! The house itself, severe and repellent. Within, grace, beauty, taste." Before he inherited, the house was burnt on a summer's afternoon, between one and five, with the aged Tatton a pathetic and powerless spectator (May 23, 1911). The men of Sledmere, with perfect discipline and some courage, saved the contents. The furniture was removed piece by piece, and the great pictures were safely housed in the adjoining church. The folio books were taken away in wagons, and at the baronet's request the Apollo Belvedere was saved by the men's exertions at the last moment. Some of them risked their lives and thought nothing about it. As one big picture was being carried out on the landing the roof began to melt overhead in drops of liquid lead. In the grim silence the under-keeper was heard to exhort thus: "Now, lads, mind you don't damage the frame." Yorkshiremen are probably much the same in peace or war. Mark was due to make a speech at Pickering almost immediately afterwards, and he failed not to recall the gallantry of the men who had risked their lives to save the old furniture.

At Sledmere Mark spent childhood. Instead of a preparatory school he was placed in charge of a succession of tutors, Mr. Dowling, Mr. Beresford, Mr. Thieme. At an early age he was introduced to the traditional sport of Yorkshiremen, and in 1887 he was " blooded " with the ceremonial baptism of foxhunters while riding with the York and Ainstey hounds. But the course of boyhood was broken by visits to far-away countries. In after years Mark wrote : " Before I was fifteen I visited Assouan, which was then almost the Dervish frontier. Then I went to India, when Lord Lansdowne was Viceroy. I did some exploration in the Arabian desert, enjoying myself barefooted amongst the Arabs, and I paid a trip to Mexico, reaching there just when Porfirio Diaz was attaining the zenith of his power." Sir Tatton probably was the greatest globe-wanderer of his time. Without making any explorations or recording any of his experiences, he had penetrated into every known part of the world, generally taking his wife and child with him. Lady Sykes's cheques for her annual children's tea-party at Hull used to arrive from Jerusalem, South Africa, Brazil, Cairo and Mexico. From which we may deduce the wanderings of the infant Mark.

While travelling in Egypt in 1888 Sir Tatton was glad to unburden his son on the ruling Sirdar, Lord Grenfell, with whom Mark spent most of his days acquiring a child's knowledge of Egyptology. His cicerone recalled him as " the most intelligent boy I had ever met. Mark took the greatest possible interest in my growing museum; he very soon mastered the rudiments of the study; he could read the cartouches containing the names of various kings, and, with me, studied Budge's book of hieroglyphics. When he began to acquire knowledge he was whisked away by Sir Tatton."

His father was responsible for the larger stage on which Mark's life-work was to be carried out. From childhood his eager eyes were turned to the mysterious Biblical lands collected as Turkey-in-Asia. What to most children is the most disagreeable page in map-making spelt to the youthful Mark holidays, adventure, romance. His father dashed him away on long journeys regardless of academic time. In 1898 Mark wrote " of the weird Druses of Lebanon," whom few schoolboys could name or place: " When I was a little boy of ten I was taken by my father to their mountain, again when I was eleven, again when I was thirteen, and lastly, five years later, I visited them alone."

His kinsman, Lord Howard de Walden, was Mark's principal companion, and recalls old days vividly enough:

" About 1894 I was enveloped in one of her whirlwind moods by Jessica—whose kindness, like everything else about her, was almost riotous—and flung into the society of a large, round, amiable boy of my own age. Three years of Cheam and one of Eton had produced a sort of palæolithic cave-boy in me with a crust of classical education. Even so, I think it took me about three minutes to succumb completely to Mark's charm, even though he opened the conversation by demanding my opinion on the Fourth Dimension. Being a young Etonian . . . ! I think Mark was as lonely as I was, for he adopted me and added me to the retinue which he employed for his romantic purposes. Witness the battle of Sledmere Church, which nearly brought about the death of Grayson. The church was nearly completed to stand as Sir Tatton's permanent protest against the religious beliefs of his wife and successors. Mark ordained that the church was to stand the onslaught of the heretics, represented by old Grayson and the twins of Jones, the jockey. After a prolonged siege the heretics attempted to take the outer palisades of the church by escalade, and were repulsed with one casualty. Old Grayson, being eighty, was not of an age to stand a fall from a fifteen-foot ladder. Even then I do not know if it was chance or diabolic humour that made Mark a Catholic and myself an Anglican defend the church against the heretics, who I think would willingly have become Mohamedans if Mark had taken to Mahomet. . . . And then the bull-fight. Here we infringed the strictest law of the Olympians. One might do anything at Sledmere but frighten the mares. Now and again Mark's antics would evoke a wild old spectre flapping from the house, and a sort of high nasal litany would come down the wind: 'You mustn't frighten the mares! You mustn't frighten the mares!'

“ Separated only by a paling from the sacred mares there lived an ox. Mark, inspired by recent experience in Mexico, ordained a bull-fight. After a considerable rehearsal to enable us to approach with the correct pomp and dignity (Mark was very firm about this), we advanced into the paddock gracefully draped in red tablecloths. Unfortunately, the alleged ox was a genuine bull, who without rehearsal gave a most convincing exhibition, and we arrived red-draped among the precious mares almost simultaneously. The Jones twins were at a respectful distance befitting mere banderillos, and escaped the way they came. The mares were naturally surprised, but I don’t think Sir Tatton ever suspected the enterprise.

“ The library at Sledmere was ransacked, and there Mark fell across a volume of Vauban. This was rapidly absorbed, and nothing would satisfy Mark but a model siege upon the lawn, so shortly there rose a fortress about ten foot square, laid out strictly according to Vauban, bastions, lunettes, redans and all else. Guns were represented by door-bolts, and I was told off to invest the fortress scientifically. With a saloon rifle apiece we fired alternate shots, but any digging involved the loss of a shot. This meant that I dug madly while Mark shot. I withdrew about fifty yards and designed my parallels. By the third day of the siege the lawn was a nightmare. I had closed upon the doomed fortress, and, joy of joys, I looked like beating Mark at one of his own games. About this moment Sir Tatton glanced at what had once been a fair lawn and was now a mole’s Walpurgis night. I faded into the horizon, but Mark came out of the situation manfully. Sir Tatton was then ploughing up the park 'to sweeten the ground,' and Mark maintained that our performance was doing the same for the lawn!"

The thirteen years devoted to Mark's education followed a very original way, but not without due results on the proper place he was destined to take in life. From the point of view of the schoolmaster and the don those years were a sorry waste. The unfortunate youth did not even with coaching pass the Cambridge Little Go! And had Mark Sykes been an ordinary character their judgment would have been right. He would have been good only to potter through life. But his mind was not ordinary. It was wonderfully receptive and he had immense powers of observation. From seven years of age onwards he had lived with grown-up people, travelled with grown-up people and heard public affairs discussed by grown-up people. He had absorbed what he heard. He had used his eyes to advantage, and among schoolboy contemporaries he retained the formed ideas of a travelled and experienced man. He simply could not bring his mind down to Latin syntax, Greek paradigms and elementary algebra. It would be difficult to name a single school subject in which he had the slightest interest. Map-drawing was indeed a pleasure to him, but even then not the map-drawing of the schoolboy but of the geographer and the soldier with finished contours. Once Sir Tatton found maps nailed to the mahogany doors of the schoolroom and uncomplainingly filled up the nail-holes with beeswax!

Mark was far from uneducated and the reverse of uncultured. While his father gave him his taste for travel, his mother gave him no slight enthusiasm for literature. Her reading, in four languages, was extensive and not limited by period. She would ask for a period and tell a brilliant story to match. French literature she knew as well as a Frenchman. She could have passed an examination in Balzac, and she succeeded in giving her son an undying admiration for Dickens and Swift. It was not difficult to trace Swift's *sæva indignatio* in Mark's future political style.

Mark combined extraordinary knowledge with great simplicity and youthfulness. One of those who knew him has touched in the course of this book on his considerable knowledge of sexual matters combined with innocence. Sir Richard Burton's notes to the "Arabian Nights" were not written *virginibus puerisque*, but at sixteen years of age Mark Sykes had read and mastered those notes. He was cognizant of their meaning and their implication, and for all the effect they had on his morals they might have been disquisitions on the remains of neolithic man.

A lasting influence and companionship in Mark's life was the arrival of Mr. Egerton Beck as his tutor, who came to know and appreciate Mark in his early and last days perhaps better than was given to other of mortal men. It is only right that the personal memory of Mark as well as the summary of his career should follow in the words of Mr. Beck:

"His life from sixteen to twenty-one was just as exceptional in its character as his life had been from eight to sixteen. On his sixteenth birthday he started for Monaco, where for a few months he attended the school of the Italian Jesuits. Monte Carlo was a strange spot to choose for the residence and education of an English boy, but the choice was probably due to the friendship existing between his mother and the Princess of Monaco. He knew all about Monte Carlo; he was interested in his dogs and in mankind, and the absurdities of the toy State amused him, such as the miniature army, the blank wall used as the official gazette, and the culminating fact that Prince and Bishop, Church and State in Monaco were run by the Casino. On one occasion the Prince went to visit the Empress Eugénie at Cap Martin, taking Mark with him. Among the guests was an English naval captain who suddenly inquired of Mark who the Prince of Monaco might be, having evidently never heard of prince or principality! Mark assured him that he was the Prince of Monaco, nothing more, nothing less. 'What?' exclaimed the sailor, 'Prince of that place over there?' 'Exactly,' replied his schoolboy companion. Mark retold the story with immense gusto at the humour of the situation, the guest of the Empress not even knowing of the existence of the neighbouring sovereign.

"Monaco at that period was really rather a contemptible place. The Prince was absent from his State for eight months in the year, during which it was administered by a Governor-General who was paid the princely salary of £750 a year. Mark was chiefly interested in the activities of the police and their intimate knowledge of the doings of every resident in the principality. During his stay on the Riviera the thing which interested him most was the cavern near Mentone, where the archæological chaplain of the Prince of Monaco showed him the remains of some gigantic troglodytes. As for the boys he met, he was head and shoulders above them in his knowledge of the world and of the things that matter, though they would undoubtedly have beaten him in every subject of academic instruction.

"This was the case everywhere. At Brussels he looked on his schoolfellows as mere children, on one occasion as offensive children who required punishment which he duly administered to the dismay of the President of the Institut Saint Louis, who did not know how to deal with such a case! When he reached Cambridge the position was much the same. The bulk of the other undergraduates were little more than schoolboys in his estimation. He had very little to do with them. He entertained them most hospitably when they came to his rooms, but he rarely went to theirs. Besides his friends George Bowles and John Hugh Smith, there was one real exception among the undergraduates—Edmund Sandars—a man of very exceptional ability, whose early life had, like Mark's, not been confined to England. Sandars was indeed a genius and a ripe scholar in the Law, and little as he had in common with Mark academically, they were not unlike in their natural qualities and their outlook on life.

"During his couple of years at Cambridge Mark broke his even course twice by journeyings in the

East; once to the Hauran and once through Syria and over Ararat into Russia. On the second of these journeys he came to the Euphrates and required a ferryman to ferry him over. On his refusal Mark promptly reviled him and his mother and all his female ancestresses up to Eve in fluent and choice Arabic. An onlooker described the scene as inexpressibly striking. A friend, hearing the story, asked him afterwards how much Arabic he really knew, and was told—exactly one hundred and fifty words: they had obviously been chosen with discrimination!

"Whether Mark asked permission of his college authorities is for them to say, but he unhesitatingly acknowledged his indebtedness to their complacency. In the intervals of his travels, which, all said and done, were the prelude to his life work, he rode, he acted, he read long and deeply his favourite authors, and he delighted his friends with his powers of mimicry. For hours on end he would reproduce scenes in the desert or the bazaar. Dickens, Swift and Shakespeare were his real friends; and his love of the last persisted to the end. Walter Wilson, his faithful secretary, recalls a very long journey on foreign railways during the war, to relieve the tedium of which Mark and Sir George Lloyd quoted and counter-quoted from Shakespeare to each other, each trying to guess the provenance of the other's lines. Even on his last disastrous mission to Syria a Shakespeare went in his bag.

"The net result of his mixed education, besides his Arabic, was a love of English literature, a good working knowledge of French, an extensive knowledge of men and affairs, and a first-hand acquaintance with other lands. This placed him in many ways far above the ordinary undergraduate of twenty-one. One wonders how many subalterns could produce such a list of authors as he read during the South African war or how many of them were guided in designing the defences of their blockhouses by schoolboy readings of the works of Vauban. The usual monotonous drill in the classics or in mathematics creates a certain capacity and aptitude for detail which Mark ever lacked. His ideas were spacious, his schemes extensive, his energy in developing them unbounded, but the details had perforce to be left to others. As a well-known proconsul who came into contact with him during the war once remarked: 'Sykes is undoubtedly a genius, his schemes are magnificent, but it wants an army of officials to work them out.' Those in authority at his college, more broadminded than is common with their kind, were far-sighted enough to recognize even unconventional genius, and only asked that *pro forma* he should pass one part of the Little Go. He tried and failed. Nothing more was said, and he stayed on at Cambridge till the autumn of 1900, when he was summoned to join his militia battalion for the South African war. He spent a few months at Aldershot, and then, in April 1901, sailed for Capetown.

"Everything Mark did or left undone seemed in some mysterious way to prepare him for his life work. He reached Sledmere from South Africa in May 1902, after two years of anxiety and discomfort, and six months later started on another eastern journey which took him over 1,600 miles of the Turkish Empire; and on his way home he was presented to the Caliph.

"His marriage with Miss Edith Gorst came in the autumn of 1903 and was followed by adventure for both in Asia Minor. From that time his wife was, when possible, his companion; when that could not be, she encouraged him and urged him on, realizing that his knowledge and his experience must be utilized for his country's good. Mark's faith in her was unbounded, and her share in the production of his public work must never be overlooked. Together they went to Constantinople in 1905 on his appointment as honorary attaché to Sir Nicholas O'Conor, then Ambassador. This followed a short term of service in the Irish Office as private secretary to Mr. George Wyndham. He was devoted to his chief, but the work of a private secretary was something for which Mark Sykes was certainly not cut out; Constantinople and its opportunities were much more to his liking. When the pleasant days with Sir Nicholas O'Conor drew to an end, Mark and his wife, with daughter and son, who had been born in Constantinople, returned to England; and he then began seriously to prepare for entering Parliament. Twice in 1910 he was rejected for his own division, Buckrose, but in 1911 he was elected for Hull. His maiden speech was made in the November of that year; he had been in no hurry, he had waited for the moment when he could speak on things as to which he was perhaps better informed than anyone sitting in the House—the affairs of Islam throughout the world. The House of Commons is one of the most difficult places in the world for a man to obtain real attention; but Mark Sykes established his position with his first speech—a position which Mark kept for himself to the end. He was never a debater in the ordinary sense of the term, for his speeches were always foreseen and prepared with extraordinary care; still when he rose to speak the House filled, for it was recognized that something worth listening to was a certainty, that even if the speech were apropos of nothing which had gone before, and bore but little relation to the debate as a whole, it would contain points, suggestions and imposing ideas which would be heard from none other.

"For the next three years his parliamentary duties were his chief concern, and then came the fatal 4 August 1914. Little could he have foreseen the part he was to play before the war was finished. His territorial battalion was called up and his business was to train it, not for manœuvres but for the grim realities of war. His training was very thorough; he would probably not have objected to its being called brutal, but his one and only concern was efficiency combined with the safety of those under his command whom he hoped to lead into action. That was denied him; but more than one of his officers wrote later on to thank him for the stern training he had given them, attributing to it the fact that they were alive and writing to him. He had taught them to take cover, and when his battalion of the Green Howards went into action its casualties were trifling in comparison with those of many other units. One thing Mark would not do: ask those under him to undergo discomfort which he avoided himself. This showed itself in a characteristic fashion; when the battalion had to ford a stream he, the colonel, dismounted and went through the water with them on foot.

"He loved his battalion, but Lord Kitchener wanted him for more important things. In the summer of 1915 he was given a commission in the regular army with a position on the general staff; Lord Kitchener then sent him to the East on a special mission of inquiry, and he left England on 1 June with his secretary, Sergeant Wilson. He visited Athens, Sofia and Salonica, then the headquarters of Sir Ian Hamilton, Athens, and once more Cairo. Then on to Aden, and back to Cairo. Leaving the latter place he again visited Aden. He then went on to India to discuss the problems of Baghdad and Kut el Amara; and it may be said that at Simla he was greatly shocked to find that he, a soldier and a staff officer, was expected in time of war to have brought civilian evening dress to dine in. He only had his khaki.

"From Simla he went on to Basra, and then to Kut el Amara. He reached England in December, and after reporting to Lord Kitchener, was instructed to draw up with M. Georges Picot an arrangement for dealing with Syria, Mesopotamia and Anatolia. The result was the much discussed Sykes-Picot agreement, which later on was subjected to much ill-informed criticism. The agreement was actually concluded on the lines of Sir Maurice de Bunsen's Commission, and though Mark was undoubtedly the driving force in

London, he was in fact the agent of the Foreign Office, acting under its instructions. It could hardly have been otherwise; for in spite of his extensive knowledge of Near Eastern affairs, in diplomacy he was a tyro and an amateur; and it is incredible that even the Foreign Office should have given such a one a free hand in negotiations with a trained and exceedingly able diplomatist. Mark has been blamed for certain provisions in this agreement; but the blame, if any be due, must be attributed to the department which employed him, supervised him and, in fact, amended his draft agreement.

"The agreement with France required the co-operation of Russia, and to Russia Mark was then sent to negotiate with the Imperial Government. He left London in February and was back again in a couple of months' time, having visited Bergen, Stockholm, Petrograd, Moscow, Tiflis and Baku. He had an audience with the Emperor and dined with him. The impression made upon him by the Autocrat of All the Russias is interesting and worthy of record. To this shrewd judge of men the Emperor appeared as a well-informed schoolboy of fifteen with a prodigious memory: he remembered the exact position of every unit in the Russian army, and as he passed down the line of officers drawn up in the ante-room before dinner he remembered what each one had done and recalled it in kindly fashion. Mark also had an audience with the Grand-Duke Alexieff in the Caucasus and told him what there was to be told of the situation at Kut. Subsequently a decoration was sent him by the Emperor,

" Mark Sykes returned to England in April 1916, and a month later was attached to the Secretariat of the Committee of Imperial Defence. In normal times it was the duty of this Committee to consider all questions relating to imperial defence; and under its direction was produced, before the war, the " War Book," the important document which detailed the steps to be taken for the defence of the realm on the outbreak of war.

" When that came, the function of the Committee changed, but the name was retained and the personnel of its Secretariat increased in number. Its officials, in fact, provided the Secretariat of the War Committee of the Cabinet till December 1916, when that of the War Cabinet was officially constituted.

" This Secretariat was the machinery for assisting the deliberations of the War Committee and for recording its decisions in regard to the conduct of the war. Its main duties were to collect material relating to the war from the various Government departments, to prepare this material for the consideration of the War Committee of the Cabinet and later for the War Cabinet; to arrange for the summoning of officials and others to attend the Committee; to circulate its decisions to those concerned, for them to take executive action; to keep and record minutes; whilst those working for the historical section of the Secretariat were attending to numerous calls from one department or another for information, and collecting, arranging in order and collating the documents sent in by the various units for safe custody—documents, many millions in number, which are now being used in the compilation of the official histories of the war.

" When Mark was appointed to serve this Committee in May 1916, he found its Secretariat a centre of such activity as would almost put a beehive to shame. The highest officials were there from early morning till late, often very late, at night, whilst papers were not infrequently being distributed to the members of the Cabinet and others long after midnight.

" Mark's own position, which differed somewhat from that of his colleagues, was that of liaison officer between the War Office, the India Office and the Foreign Office—a combination which itself is sufficient to show the importance and extent of the work on which he and the Committee he served were engaged. Seven months later, when Mr. Lloyd George became Prime Minister, he became an assistant-secretary to the War Cabinet and retained that position for about a year, when he was transferred to the Foreign Office; but his work remained the same, and in the execution of that work he never spared himself. Day after day he made what he called his rounds: first to the War Office to interview various high officials and to visit the Arabian section of the Intelligence Department, which was at that time the high-water mark of "intelligence"; then to the India Office and the Foreign Office to get the latest news from Egypt, from the Persian Gulf and Eastern Arabia, to say nothing of the doings for good or ill of our Allies. And this was not all, there were interviews with generals home on leave, with intelligence officers from one front or another, with ambassadors, with politicians, with Arabs, Syrians, Armenians and Jews, and speeches in the House. His day began with an early Mass in Westminster Cathedral, which he often served, and ended, it might be, at midnight.

"One of his chief duties from the time he was attached to the office of the Committee of Imperial Defence was the production of a weekly document known as the *Arabian Report*. This was a compilation of secret papers—telegrams, memoranda, reports of operations—relating to the affairs of the Near East, with a commentary thereon written by him for the guidance of the War Committee. The *Report* was only issued to some twenty individuals: His Majesty the King, the members of the War Committee, and some highly-placed officials. One who read his criticisms regularly can speak of his grasp of the subject and of their outspokenness: Mark was no respecter of persons. This *Report* was probably his chief contribution to the conduct of the war. Acting in the closest touch, as we have seen, with the departments principally concerned, he was the driving force of the Arabian policy of the Government, and the *Arabian Report* was the medium through which that force was mainly exercised during the most critical period in Near Eastern affairs. He took the business very seriously indeed. The actual compilation of the documents was the work of a colleague, but the night before it went to press Mark read every word of it and then wrote his criticisms: he and his assistant rarely parted till after midnight. And it may be added that he took the custody of those highly confidential documents so seriously that the dispatch box which contained them was always in his bedroom at night.

"The *Arabian Report* only lasted six months. After the formation of the War Cabinet Secretariat it was decided to have similar reports covering the whole world. To Mark was confided the *Eastern Report*, which embraced the Moslem world, Russia and the Balkans. Though still compiled from confidential documents, these new reports, the *Eastern* and the *Western*, were not in the same category as the *Arabian*. They were mainly compiled for the information of Ministers and officials who did not receive the official telegrams; with each, however, was issued an appreciation of the situation. Mark continued to write his criticisms weekly to the end except when he was absent on public duties; then his place was taken by the Hon. William Ormsby-Gore.

"His Arabian policy naturally did not commend itself to everyone; it was censured by some from the beginning and has been severely criticized since. The India Office, responsible for the huge population of India, was anxious as to the effect of the Arabian revolt against the Caliph on the seventy millions of Indian Moslems. And among those who were chiefly interested in Western Arabia, there were not a few who regarded themselves as experts, and experts are notoriously impatient one of another. Very little was known of Arabian affairs in London, and though the Government as a whole and each department in particular must be held responsible for its own acts, Mark

Sykes was practically the director of policy; and it would have been marvellous if other experts had accepted the position without murmur. But it can hardly be doubted that, taking his policy as a whole, Mark was right; subsequent events have justified him. He was hampered, and badly hampered, by his recognition of England's duty to her chief ally; but for this the resolution of Arabian affairs would have been simpler by far. Whether an Arab confederation was possible may be doubted; but had France not had claims in Syria the division of the whole area, with the exception of Palestine, into independent Arab States under the political guidance of England, would have been feasible; and the Arabs wanted the help of England and feared France—to them Algiers was an object lesson.

"No better appreciation of his work could be given than that written by Sir Arthur Hirtzel, Deputy Under-Secretary of State for India: 'The idea of the liberation of the Arab peoples from the Turkish yoke originated, as is generally supposed, with Lord Kitchener, but Sir Mark Sykes was the driving power behind the earliest attempts to convert what at first presented itself as a military necessity into a practicable political ideal. He threw himself into this task with all his many gifts and all the force of his strong personality, giving expression to it in the proclamation—deliberately Napoleonic in its tone—which was issued to the Arab world on the British occupation of Baghdad, and which strikingly illustrates three of his most marked characteristics—his imagination, his idealism and his sense of the dramatic. He was fully alive to the difficulties that lay ahead of Arab nationalism, but he believed that they could be overcome by loyal co-operation between Great Britain and France, and for this too he never ceased to work.

"'An artist to the finger tips, perhaps he saw in the world of politics, Middle Eastern and other, "the light that never was on sea or land" not only where it never was but where it never could be. Yet he had a strong practical bent too. Already in 1915 he was impressing on the authorities the necessity of establishing unity of command and control in the Eastern theatre, and in 1916 he presented a carefully worked out scheme for a Middle East department the adoption of which might well have averted some of the more serious difficulties that arose in the succeeding years. It was for the cause so dear to his heart that he virtually gave his life. His last mission to Syria was of so exacting a character that he was in no condition physically to resist the insidious disease which attacked him on his return. He died before the completion of his fortieth year: a very paragon of honour, one who had lived his life as a great Christian gentleman.'"

Two score years less one was the destined span of Mark's life. They were filled with public life and private energies, and then like a tree of the forest he fell and was carried away, leaving papers and letters, like fallen leaves, to mark the spot which knows him no more. What is rare in biographical quest, a copy of every letter he wrote for years survives. Likewise a majority of his friends survive, who have shown themselves as generous in their reminiscences as they are inconsolable of Mark's personal memory. Even so, a summary of his personality, apart from the facts of his life, is as difficult to visualize as that of some starry enthusiast of the Middle Ages, whose legend may descend the centuries on men's lips, but which neither illumined manuscript nor printer's inky dust can bring again to life. As one of his earliest friends lamented, "It seems that he died only yesterday. Yesterday he was greater than a mountain; to-day he is less than a shadow."

It is the difficulty of all biography. The spirit has perished out of the conjunction of time and space, and the letter remains. Mark's letters survive like the soul's cast clothing or coils sloughed from what was once radiant and iridescent, but is now irrevocable. Mark was one of the few letter-writers of his generation, and dearly loved to throw off the ephemeral indignations and ecstasies of his bright spirit under cover of an envelope. Of diaries which afford the biographer a more static revelation he left none. His speeches under the studied formulas of Parliament (are they not written in the Book of Hansard?) survive, often bearing the signet of his individualism. But it was to book-writing that he gave the most sustained and permanent work to which he could harness his genius. In passage after passage the biographer can glean that touch (call it genius and intuition rather than cleverness and learning) which is essentially true to his spirit, whether he is paragraphing the tale of the Caliphs in the grand manner of the eighteenth century or parodying a military handbook with the suppressed comicality of a Christmas annual. Of the rarer kind of biographica are those sketches, which may be said to reveal the quintessence of Mark, the sudden collision of humours in his unclouded mind, followed by the lightning conception, the fall of pen or pencil like a bolt to the paper and the instantaneous execution. As for his conversation, it is with the fine arts that are lost. Likewise to try to reproduce his mimicry and the gallery of portraits which his mind had stored out of the East and out of the West is a search for something as brilliant and perishable as the sunlight laughing on last year's snow.

Finally, Mark was an impressionist. For that reason he could have been a great actor, though tragedy it would have been if he had given himself to the comic stage. A brilliant veneer of impressionism overlay the unsuspected solidity and strength of his whole character. He had played with more than one art; with drama and drawing, literature and rhetoric; but he was not a Bohemian. He had travelled in spirit and body farther than that lotus-land which drained the talents of so many of his contemporaries. His character carried him beyond Bohemia into the Holy Land where he found the lodestar of his life, both spiritual and temporal.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION

MARK'S education cannot be said to have followed any fixed system, such as the Montessori or the public school course. It was by strange and rapid experiences of his own rather than by studying the written or classified experiences and emotions of others that he was trained to become a citizen of the planet. Actual writing and spelling he learnt from the worthy schoolmaster at Sledmere, Mr. Thelwell, whose final report is as follows: "As a boy he was not a diligent scholar; he did not concentrate on his work; book-work was drudgery; but having great powers of observation and a splendid memory, he stored a mass of information." Mark's favourite text-books appear in a note written in manhood: "Before I was twelve I was familiar with *Punch* and the *Illustrated London News* for many years back." Thereby he no doubt acquired more of modern history and of his own language than he was likely to learn at any English public school.

It was true that several notable academies were to claim him as an alumnus, but he kept uncertain term and often added more to his teachers' knowledge of the East than they had settled opportunity to give him of the learning of the West. He was personally acquainted with much that his companions only knew in examination papers. For instance, Damascus, that uncertain point in scriptural geography, was early made known to him. He recorded in "Dar-Ul-Islam" one terrifying experience, which clothes in words Goya's horrible picture of a madhouse:

"As a little boy I was taken by my father to see the lunatic asylum of Damascus, and the scene remains as clearly painted on my memory as if it occurred yesterday. I shall never forget the scene of misery and horror in that court. In the centre there was a muddy tank, and about twelve feet from it was a circle of kennels, each about six feet by five. Each kennel had a grille through which the wretched madmen clamoured and howled the lifelong day; over their ankles in their own ordure, naked save for their chains, these wretched beings shrieked and jibbered! Happy were those who, completely insane, laughed and sang in this inferno. The only furniture of the asylum was a cat-o'-nine-tails and a board on which, when a madman died, he was washed previous to burial. To this day I can hear one of them playing with his chain and singing a crazy song."

The most strangely assorted experiences continued. Between the Syrian desert and Beaumont College, near Windsor, between the Druses of Lebanon and the English Jesuits, between the bookies of Newmarket and the croupiers at Monte Carlo, Mark continued to absorb the values of the modern world with bright, unbored eyes. His most lasting tincture of education he acquired for himself by devouring the old-fashioned library at Sledmere. As he wrote in later years to his betrothed, Edith Gorst (April 13, 1900):

"I wish you could see the library here. It is really very interesting. Going into a library that has stopped in the year 1796 is like going back a hundred years. Everything is there of the time. In the drawers is the correspondence dated for that year. In the cupboards are the ledgers and rent rolls of the last century. If I stayed in it long I, too, would be of the last century, because everything there is of the same date, from fishing rods to the newspapers."

Between 1890 and 1895 Mark was frequently to be found during term time at Beaumont. Beaumont has been described as the Catholic Eton, and Eton would no doubt be as pleased to be called a Protestant Beaumont. The great advantages enjoyed by those two schools are too well known for recapitulation: the river, the royal neighbourhood, and the patronage of the aristocracy and distinguished foreigners.

Of Beaumont it is but just to say that Mark never showed signs of having been pressed in the Jesuit mould. They were content to teach this high-spirited, unwashed and fascinating little boy his religion. Knowing that he would never have to earn his bread, they allowed him to develop his gifts for story-telling and acting. At one time he seems to have been interested in piracy, and the navy class was composed of Mark Sykes and Cedric Dickens. Henry Dickens, Cedric's brother, writes from memory as follows: "I can see the two of them wandering into a certain catechism class presided over by a lunatic Welshman (who was subsequently cast out of the fold by the Jesuits) on Saturday afternoons, always dishevelled and invariably steeped in ink to the very bone. It must have taken years to get that ink out. I can see him, too, with his stag-beetles, of which he always kept a stock, and well remember the thrill of seeing him reduce them to intoxication with the school beer (an unheard-of feat!). I can see him, too, pretending to hang himself by the neck in a roller towel in the lavatory, and precious nearly succeeding, too, by an accident! It was my hand that liberated him. So far as my observation went, never doing a stroke of school work. I can still see old Lady Sykes descending on Beaumont like a thunderbolt, entering into tremendous fights with Father Heathcote, the then and equally pugnacious rector."

Wilfred Bowring, another contemporary, recalls: "I first saw Mark Sykes in 1890, when he came to St. John's, Beaumont. He was quite unlike any other boy, and most of the boys certainly thought him eccentric. He took no part in the games, but soon gathered round him and under him all the loiterers and loafers in playroom and playground. For their benefit he devised several war games. Sometimes he would be a Red Indian chief, at other times an Arab chieftain; and his satellites were all given odd names. I can recollect him now at the head of a motley gang, all waving roughly made tomahawks, charging across the playground to meet an opposing band. I remember, too, he had a wondrous ceremony called ‘Burying the Hatchet.’ In the playroom he naturally had a large crowd round him. He was nearly always to be seen telling stories of his travels or inventing tales of adventure for their benefit. He was very careless in his personal appearance, and mixed his garments in the most haphazard way. His appearances at school were somewhat fitful, as his father and mother would suddenly take him away for half or even a whole term, generally on fresh travels. How he ever learnt anything at school is a mystery.

“When he went in due course to the big college he suddenly made a name for himself on the stage. The college has a fine stage and fine acting traditions. His first appearance was in a farce called *Chiselling*, in which he had to be a marble statue which, unfortunately under the influence of beer, did such weird things that a deception was exposed. He was really inimitable in it, as he was, too, as the landlady in *Box and Cox*. But one chiefly recalls an item in a varied performance composed and acted by himself called *A Hyde Park Demonstration*. It was such a success that the whole item was encored. Of course, Mark was the orator, and the crowd under his tutelage little beyond him. This year he carried off the elocution prize. I imagine this was his only prize at school. Mark was a great showman. The zest he showed at rehearsals and the fun he got out of it himself was amazing. In the evenings, after supper, he used to entertain us with killing imitations which were very clever, especially a 'Turkish general talking French.'"

And from another letter: "On several occasions Lady Sykes, generally half-way through term, announced that she proposed to take Mark on a journey of indefinite length. Mark vanished from our ken for about six months, when he reappeared laden with curios from the countries he had visited. These curios nearly always took the shape of lethal weapons, most welcome gifts for his school cronies. He returned from these trips with a smattering of strange tongues. He came back full of the habits, customs, history and folk-lore of the countries he had visited."

What little time he spent at Sledmere was devoted chiefly to old Grayson, the groom, a pack of terriers, and a piebald pony which could be yoked to a home-made tub-sleigh. At home he never tired of dressing up and posing to the photographer as a farm hand, a fencing master, a ghost, an infantry soldier, or Napoleon.

An interesting reminiscence of Mark's temperament in the days at Beaumont appeared in the school magazine after his death. It is from the pen of Mr. C. T. Cary Elwes:

"He had plenty to talk about when he returned to school, and would entertain not only his schoolfellows, but the masters also, with a most intelligent account of his experiences. Most boys would have been spoiled by this kind of bringing up. Not so Mark. Though he was undoubtedly a remarkably intelligent and intensely amusing boy, his chief charm was his great simplicity and openness of character and entire freedom from human respect.

" On one occasion we were in the college theatre together. He was on the stage rehearsing his part in a play which I was getting up, whilst I was seated in the body of the hall giving him directions. All of a sudden, in the middle of a scene, he jumped off the stage and rushed helter-skelter out of the room, calling out to me as he fled: 'I quite forgot I had an appointment with Fr. Pope!' And down the passage he ran as hard as he could go to Fr. Pope's room, who was then, as he is now, Spiritual Father at Beaumont. The boys used frequently to visit Fr. Pope, but none more often than Mark.

" He was a consummate actor. On a wet day, when all the boys were assembled together in the playroom, he would stand on the table and entertain his schoolfellows with a stump speech which would go on indefinitely.

" Not content with his natural talent, he would take infinite pains to improve himself by practice, and was always ready to take advice.

" I remember once we were practising for a play in which Mark was a statue on a pedestal. During the scene he had to get off the pedestal and walk down towards the footlights. I was not satisfied with the way he did it. He got up on the pedestal and walked down to the footlights again and again, each time inquiring whether that was quite right, until at last I declared myself quite satisfied. Each time he returned to the task as cheerfully as before, without the slightest sign of weariness. He was a wonderful caricaturist. He was always at it. A most interesting and amusing book could be made of the innumerable sketches he made when a boy at school if only they could be got together. ‘Virgil Illustrated’ is the title he wrote on the cover of one exercise book in which he had made a collection of sketches full of fun. Every professional artist I have shown it to declares it to be extremely clever. There is extant at Beaumont a series of historical cartoons in which Imperial Cæsar and his legions are treated with monstrous disrespect and our Saxon and Norman forbears are displayed in attitudes and occupations of a frivolity not to be believed. Some may call this waste of time, but always some will talk nonsense. Mark knew his history better than most, and not the less that he refused to be smothered by the suffocating aridity and doubtful soundness of machine-made text-books.”

Lord Howard de Walden recalls him in the holidays: “Sledmere was to a boy of my age remarkably like fairyland. That is, anything might happen at any moment, and strange things did happen at odd moments. Through these Mark walked quite steadily, with myself trailing dutifully in pursuit. There were nightmare scenes amongst the grown-ups that faded as strangely as they began. Strangest of all were the queer evenings when theoretically Mark and I were both abed and asleep. I would wander alone to Mark's room, and whilst the elders played poker savagely Mark would talk high and disposedly of everything in the world and often of things not even discussed in private. It was my great good fortune to be introduced to the vile and ignoble things of the world by the only soul I have known who seemed to be completely proved against them. All those sexual matters, that are hinted at, boggled, hatched and evaded until the boy is initiated into a mystery in the grubby way of experience, were for Mark either dreary commonplace or subjects suited to Homeric laughter. At the same time Mark maintained that high matters should be gravely discussed with the aid of a two-stemmed hubble-bubble. This implement is designed for a taciturn race, and as I was rather doubtful about the results of smoking and Mark was talking all the time, the instrument never remained alight for more than a few seconds.

" But, whilst Mark and I were becoming close friends, unfortunate changes were taking place. My mother, who was nervous and delicate, became afraid of Jessica. I must admit that Jessica, partially caged and embittered, was terrifying. At last Mark and I saw that our friendship could not continue. Mark had been more than a friend. He had been a sort of miraculous Philistine striding through the difficult age of adolescence and bowling over the conventions that I could only blindly resent. We had never talked of religion and we had never discussed our mothers. These two things we kept sacred. We knew what was putting us apart, and I think it was bad for both of us. The parting had to come, and

Mark shook hands with me a little ruefully and said suddenly: 'If we meet again we shall smile at this. If not, then was this parting well made.' The parting was well made. We never were together again but once—after the death of Lady Sykes. I asked the manner of her end, and Mark said it was like the last phase of Napoleon."

Mark left Beaumont after the autumn term of 1894, and stayed at Sledmere during the severe winter following until March. He was thrown largely on his own resources, and devoted himself to the study of Marshal Saxe's treatise on fortification. In Saxe Mark loved to decipher an ideal hero, not unlike himself in coming as "an unknown quantity in the midst of the calculations of plain men"—one who "flung himself with the same energy into the performance of the trivial as the sublime"—to quote the brilliant sketch-life he wrote serially in the *Green Howards Gazette* (Nos. 145-153, 1905). On his sixteenth birthday he left England for Monaco, taking with him three fox-terriers and a tutor. He became a day-boy at the school of the Jesuits therein. Mark afterwards wrote: "When I was sixteen I accompanied my tutor to Monaco. The atmosphere of Monte Carlo, it can be imagined, was a peculiar one for a boy of my years. It is quite natural to think of people going there for pleasure, but for study seems rather curious. I knew everything about the inner workings of the tables and knew most of the croupiers; very respectable citizens, too, they were. The Italian school system is extraordinarily rigid and hard. It was no child's play at

Monaco. Having come under the influence of the Latin idea of education, I made myself *au fait* with the Teutonic by attending the Institut St. Louis, Brussels. I came to the conclusion that in Belgium the schoolboys were very much overworked, though the results achieved are tremendous.''

At Monaco the youthful Mark surprised his ecclesiastical teachers by the liberty he was allowed by his tutor, Mr. Beck. But Mark was singularly free of the frailties which usually attend gilded youth. He might have seemed an easy mark for the professional gambler or the myrmidons of pleasure. As a matter of fact, accompanying his mother to racecourse and play-table had bred in him first boredom and then positive dislike. Typically he was discovered about this time behind the Jockey Club at Newmarket engrossed in the writings of Jonathan Swift. Newmarket and Monte Carlo he quickly put away amongst childish things.

Mr. Egerton Beck writes: "He went to the Jesuit school at Monaco, and there made the acquaintance of two young Italians of whom he saw a great deal, one of the Campeggio-Malvazzi family and a Marochetti; both of these felt that they had English interests, Campeggio-Malvazzi being a collateral descendant of the Cardinal Campeggio who came to England in connection with the divorce of Queen Catherine, and Marochetti a grandson of the Baron Marochetti the sculptor, one of whose works is the statue of Richard I by the Houses of Parliament. He made excursions to Nice, Grasse, Antibes, Lerins, San Remo. He also went for walks in the hills with the Duc de Richelieu, of whom he saw a good deal at the palace. But beyond his schoolwork his chief occupation was the care of his fox-terriers, of which he took out three and brought back eight! He left Monaco in July, 1895, and in the following October went to Brussels, where he stayed for a year, going to school at St. Louis. From Brussels he made excursions to the chief towns of Belgium and also to Aix-la-Chapelle. But there again his chief amusement was the care of his dogs, a terrier and an enormous bulldog whose presence generally secured an empty pavement! In later times he spoke of the benefit he had received from those foreign schools. The study of character there had enabled him to understand political matters more easily."

His own failure in education always enabled him to speak with peculiar fluency on that debated question. For instance, at Pickering Catholic School (August 9, 1909): "The real test of education was not what fancy tricks of mind and body a child could be put through, but the spirit, the tradition with which we had saturated the mind. Educationalists were inclined to mistake form for substance, and forget that examinations, exercises and meals were only the outer edge of the matter, and that until we had infused into the spirit of the people the same spirit that was infused into the boys of our great public schools we were beating the waves as vainly as did the Persian king."

Mark never received either the form or substance of education from his fond parents. It is humorous to think of the deliverer of excellent educational speeches—nay, the future son-in-law of a Minister of Education—composedly avoiding all that his parents could offer him in their rival zeal. Tatton had not succeeded in sending him to Harrow because his mother was insistent on Beaumont. Mark fell between two schools of learning. However, his father took him to hear famous criminal trials instead of the pantomime. With his little legs dangling he had watched the solemn and terrible processes of British law. His father had whisked him to Lebanon and the Jordan instead of to south coast watering-places for the holidays. In consequence he had never been properly taught to shoot as other squires' sons. On the banks of the Jordan he shot a sitting water-wagtail with an airgun, his first and for long his chief sporting exploit. Then he had been rushed to Cambridge with a suite provided by his impetuous mother. Tatton would have preferred Oxford, the home of the Gothic revival; and Mark's closest friend, George Bowles, was actually going to Oxford, but at Lady Sykes's command he was hurriedly transferred in order to keep company with Mark in Jesus Lane. McEwen was added as *maître de chambre*, a soft-voiced, slightly inebriated, charming Irishman, with the manners of a grandee, and the admirable Mr. Egerton Beck was placed in final and unquestioned charge.

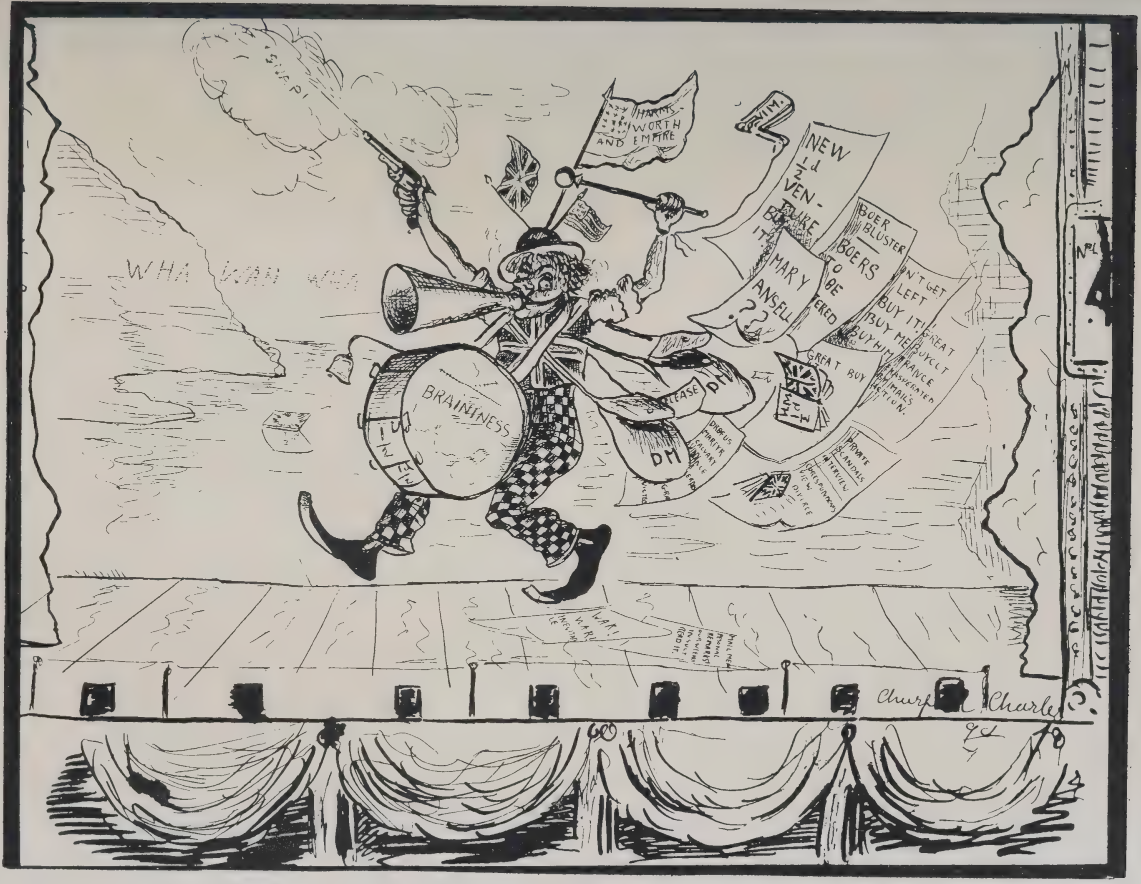
At Easter, 1897, he went to Cambridge, and matriculated at Jesus College. He took rooms at

33 Jesus Lane, and shared in exactly the sides of University life agreeable to him. As a man of the world, conversant with East and West, with Catholicism and Mohammedanism, he could not help finding the experience a narrow one. But for the first time he met individuals of his mother's brilliance who stirred him in different ways with a new zest for letters or friendship.

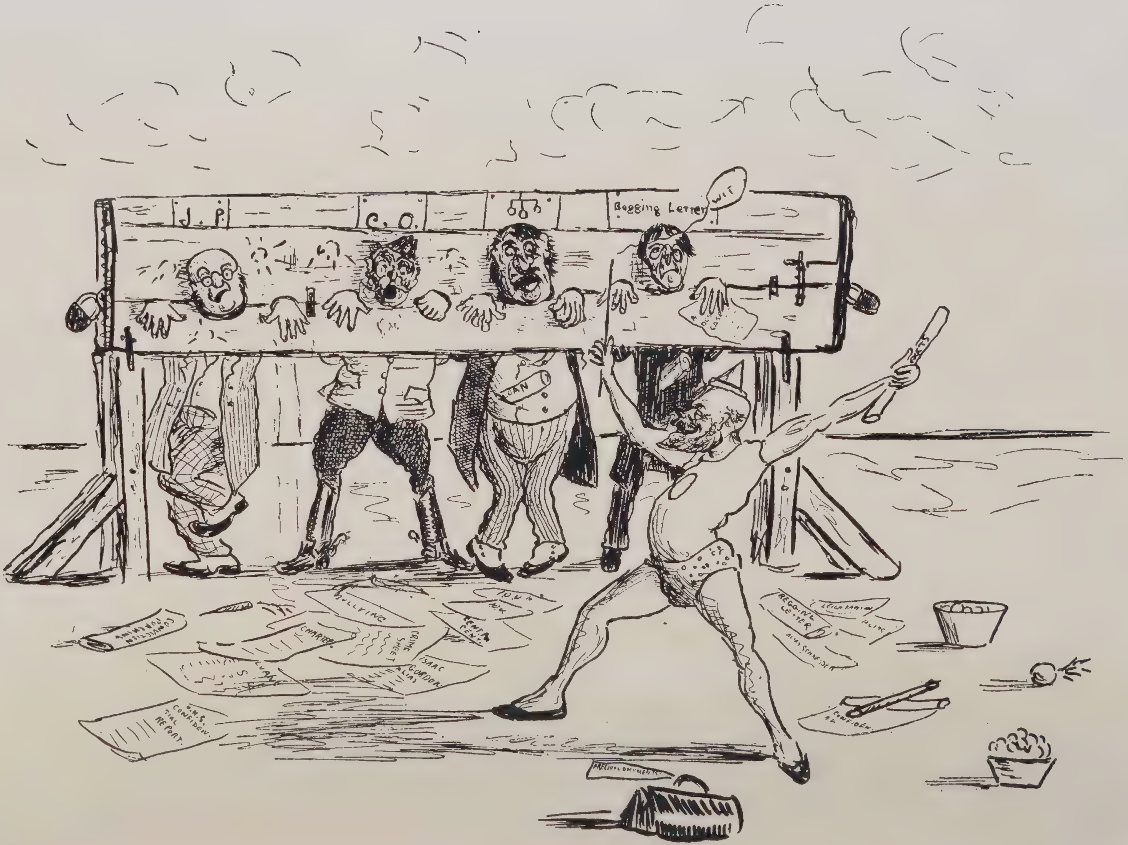
Mark's existence at Cambridge was as unusual as the rest of his education. His appearances there were interludes between the journeys which gave rise to his first two books, "Through Five Turkish Provinces" and "Dar-Ul-Islam." He sat cross-legged, frequently in some Eastern headdress and smoking a hookah, revising the MS. or proof of his books, preparing lectures, posters or articles, and endlessly relating tales of his travels. He made few intimate friends from those of his own standing; perhaps only three —George Bowles, John Hugh Smith and Edmund Sandars. Those whom he made friends remained friends to death. His undergraduate intimates had not the power of being perfectly at ease with their elders, and therefore when he passed into the rooms of his Don friends they lost sight of him. He was a youth of many acquaintances, though very few shared his long and talkative walks accompanied by a Damascus pariah dog named Gneiss, whose wolf-like trot and treacherous snap were alike unpleasing to the Irish terriers of Cambridge.

With his own college he had little in common. Jesus was a mediæval foundation which in the course of modern progress had passed from the housing of religious women to the production of less devout but highly trained oarsmen. But for the river Mark had no predilection. He was of those of whom it might be said that they neither toiled nor did they spin up and down the green and scented courses of the Cam. Besides, like Naaman the Syrian, he could have said: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, more to me than all the waters of Cam and Granta?" The only exercise he took was horse-riding. He passed through the University without losing an iota of his individuality and wholly unaffected by the machine. He did no work, played no games. He went off on his travels or he returned, as he pleased, in the middle of term or of vacation. He never dined in hall, and the college records show definitely that he passed no examinations and acquired no degree. In his free-lance paper, the *Snarl*, which he edited, he described the Master of Arts as the triumph of mediocrity! To University journalism and theatricals he gave himself, however, with ardour. He began to speak at the Union with stuttering hesitation, but trained himself to become a fine speaker.

The *Granta*, which is "*Punch* with a little Cam water," was his first field. Number 266 (October 21, 1899), for instance, showed considerable signs of his industry. He provided the leader, "A Sangrado Policy," on the Militia; a skit called "The Granta War Trolley," a cartoon entitled "Taste," the dramatic criticism, the illustrations of a "Limerick,"


SNAP!
HARMSWORTH AND EMPIRE
VIM.
NEW ½d VENTURE BUY IT.
BOER BLUSTER
BOERS TO BE ...ERED
MARY ANSELL ???
...N'T GET LEFT BUY IT! BUY ME! BUY HIM
GREAT BUYCOT FRANCE EXASPERATED BY MAIL'S ACTION.
GREAT BUY
PRIVATE SCANDALS INTERVIEW CORRESPONDENTS VIEW DIVORCE
DREYFUS MARTYR CALVARY
PLEASE
DM
BRAININESS
WHA WAH WHA
WAR! WAR! INEVITABLE
MAIL MEN PERSONAL REMARKS OUR WEEKLY INSULT READ IT.
Nº1

THE IMPERIAL ECSTASY OF THE "DAILY MAIL."


J.P.
C.O.
Begging Letter
WIT
A DOLLS CASE
FACTS
OAN
I.O.U.
W.K.
RENT A CENT.
BULLYING
CHARITY
CRIME SHEET
ISAAC GORDON ALIAS
LOAN
CONVICTION JUDGMENT
G.M.S. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT.
BEGGING LETTER
ALIAS SCHNEIDER
LEIGHDARMIN
PLIK
CONFIDEN. RA
PRECIOUS DOCUMENTS.

THE PILLORY OF TRUTH.

a cartoon of Mr. Labouchere, and "Two Views." The latter dealt impartially with the question whether undergraduates should hunt, as follows:

The Dons say No because . . .	Others say Yes because . . .
1. Others say Yes.	1. The Dons say No.
2. They do not hunt themselves (with apologies to Mr. Waldstein).	2. Dons never hunt.
3. There is nothing about hunting in the University Statute Book.	3. There is nothing about the Statute Book in hunting.
4. It is very expensive.	4. It is expensive.
5. It is sporting.	5. It is sport.
6. There are enough healthy pastimes in Cambridge.	6. They cannot breathe sewage all day.
7. It is a waste of time.	7. Life without it is a blank.
8. They shouldn't.	8. They're going to.

Mr. Waldstein was, of course, the daring cross-country rider now known as Sir Charles Walston. While George Bowles was editor of the *Granta* Mark drew a number of sketches symbolic of modern journals. They were the most finished work that ever left his pen, and, as he confided to the editor, were not unintended to catch the eye of Miss Edith Gorst. The series included the Pillory of *Truth*, the *Times* Sphinx, the Imperial Ecstasy of the *Daily Mail*, the Grand Guignol of *Reynolds' News* and the Decrepitude of *Punch* at that time.

But his real venture in journalism was the *Snarl*. Wearied by the acrid disputes between his parents, he turned his mind to new interests of which he wished them to know as little as possible. Henry Cholmondeley was his confidant, and to him he wrote naïvely (October 16, 1899): "I am writing to tell you that I am starting a newspaper named the *Snarl*. I calculate the loss on three copies at about £10. I think the venture is worth trying. The bills and profits will go to the estate office. It may possibly pay its expenses. I calculate on a certain sale, but at the same time I am paying somewhat for the contributions and also on the necessary advertisement, so please send me a cheque book. I shall not tell my mother I have one, or use it for any other purpose but that of paying contributors, advertisements, posters, circulars. I enclose a proof of my circular. If you think my father will write to stop me, do not tell him, as the production is well worth trying and may make one a certain kind of reputation."

He certainly made a reputation for attacking University problems with refreshing vigour. He wrote strongly against the Prize Fellowships which could be enjoyed by non-residents. They were abolished in 1922, in proof of his foresight.

The *Snarl*, described as an "Occasional Journal for Splenetics," played its ephemeral part in the 'Varsity of the time. It was apparently written entirely by Mark. The first number had an amusing cartoon by him of the Chancellor of the University, the late Duke of Devonshire, begging at the Senate railings. Parodies of Gibbon and the Thousand and One Nights filled up space. Mark also drew a caricature of his future father-in-law, Sir John Gorst, the Member for the University, over the heading, "He has to represent them!" To Sir John's home circle Mark and George Bowles were admitted every Sunday afternoon, where they never failed to appreciate his sardonic irony on his colleagues or on the Education of which he had been Minister. Mark used to ride most days with Miss Edith Gorst, to whom he would send rather mysterious Oriental notes, such as:

> *Inshallah* (By God's Will)
> *Bukra* (to-morrow) 10.30
> *Shams we Shita* (sun or rain).

Letters to her always began "Hon. and W.B.L. Co-relig." or "Honoured and Well-beloved Co-religionist," in reference to the fact that she was also a convert to the Catholic Faith. His signature to his inamorata was simply "TT," or being interpreted, generally by a ferocious sketch, "Terrible Turk!"

Mark became famous by his acting at the A.D.C., for which he was also capable of producing a vivid poster. He took parts in *The Ballad Monger*, *The Critic* (Governor of Tilbury Fort), *The Other Fellow* (Lucius Camel), while his poster of Robert Macaire long hung on Cambridge walls. On one occasion he locked the theatre doors during a rehearsal and would not allow the actors to go into Hall until they had satisfied his requirements on the stage.

The college chapter is always a difficult one to fill in biography. The most brilliant undergraduates tend towards uneventful mediocrity in the future, while the most inconspicuous often become the best known. However, if biography has to be written, the forgetful minds of tutors have to be plied and even the memories of college servants searched for anecdotes they never seem to have known. Fortunately, Mark, while making no impress on the University as a whole, lived long in the memory of the more human Dons with whom he came into contact.

Jesus College had been visited by genius aforetime. Laurence Sterne and Samuel Coleridge had sheltered under her roof, and the latter had been as much appreciated in his own college as Shelley had been at Oxford. When Mark came to Jesus the college was on the eve of recovery from evil days. Athletic and scholastic distinction had fallen with the numbers. But under Dr. Morgan, the witty Master, the corner was turned, and soon after Mark's time Jesus won academic prizes and theological first classes in gratifying shoals. Hugh Shield, who had been Liberal M.P. for the borough, was bursar, and his frequent attendance at Newmarket brought him into understanding touch with Mark's mother. Arthur Gray, a real antiquarian, was tutor, and he became immediately interested in Mark's discoveries of Eastern inscriptions. The Dons at Jesus did what they could to help and nothing to impede the strange youth who came under their charge, and had he lived they intended to admit him after the war to their honorary fellowship.

Dr. Foakes Jackson, of Jesus College, writes to us: "Mark Sykes was one of the ablest young men I have known in Cambridge, in whose boundless possibilities for usefulness, had he been spared, I had the fullest confidence. I may say at the offset I was not impressed by him when he first came. He struck me as a rather undeveloped youth whose education had been neglected. I considered that he would soon vanish from the scene and be no more heard of. By slow degrees I realized that Sykes was a man of exceptional powers. I discovered that he was one of those people who really understand the traveller's art and can educate themselves by observation; whereas, in my experience, most of those who wander far afield seem to come back less interesting and more tiresome because more talkative than before. Sykes showed even as a lad an extraordinary grasp of all that was really important in the countries he visited, and surprised those who knew him by the breadth of his interests. What friends he had were older men, like Dr. Montagu James, Provost of King's, and E. G. Browne, Professor of Arabic. I long counted him among my friends, and I fancy he had a liking for me. And I delighted to hear him talk. I particularly remember that he once took up the cavalry manœuvres of the Romans, and came to my rooms and explained at great length their formation and methods of charging in a *quincunx* or group of five. He gave me a regular lecture on the subject. Would that my classical teachers had been as lucid as he was! He had also a remarkable knowledge of Dickens, which he said was due to his mother's admiration of that author. I once travelled to Chester with him to a political meeting. I don't think we talked of any other topic, and we talked incessantly. At that time there was a great Dickens boom in

Cambridge, and though I own that on one occasion I was hopelessly worsted by Dr. McTaggart, and no doubt would have fallen before the Provost of King's, I could hold my own with most experts. Mark Sykes fairly amazed me, and I particularly remember that as one of the few instances where Dickens deserves credit for describing a perfect gentleman Sykes quoted Mr. Harefield in 'Barnaby Rudge.' I countered with Twemlow in 'Our Mutual Friend,' so I think that honours were about even, as I have never heard either name adduced, and Sykes and I were both right. On another occasion he came to my rooms, while I was entertaining some American friends, with an extraordinary gentleman dressed in the height of Parisian fashion whose French accent proved that his whole life had not been spent in studying the Koran. I did not catch his name, and I whispered to Sykes: 'Who is he?' 'The Sultan's brother-in-law!'

"I was most impressed by his great political sagacity, his deep religious convictions, his broad outlook on life. I always believed he had a great future before him, and ranked him with the greatest Cambridge men. For I have learned that they are not always the brilliant youths whom the University delights to honour, who ripen like medlars into withered pedagogues or are respected as safe if incapable men of business, but those who pass unnoticed as ships in the night, and yet are heavily laden with cargoes as precious as any which are borne throughout the world by others who have contributed to make Cambridge the *alma mater* of great men."

He was coached by the Rev. E. G. Swain, of King's, whose impression remains fresh in spite of the years which have elapsed. He writes: "I soon discovered that he had no more than the mildest curiosity about the examination, but a great readiness to receive and discuss any information that could be brought within the four corners of the subject. He had his own notions concerning what he wanted to learn, and was not to be diverted from them. He had also his own views about the importance of his engagements with me in relation to other engagements that clashed with them. About once a week his man McEwen appeared in his place with a message to the effect that Mr. Sykes regretted that he 'could not attend upon my instructions that day,' the words being evidently those of McEwen. Sykes was in no way well taught. There were many matters usually learned at school of which he was altogether ignorant, probably because he had no desire to learn them; I mean things like accidence and syntax. It was a side of language he had been allowed to neglect, and I doubt whether he would ever have acquired any precision in the use of language. A pupil of this kind was obviously not one to be kept in hiding. Sykes was soon introduced into the social circle in King's that formed round Dr. Montagu James, who was then Dean. He never failed to be unobtrusively amusing, and, since none of us had had experiences like his, he was always interesting. His experiences of travel, acute observation, retentive memory and great powers of mimicry supplied him with means of entertainment such as no one else possessed, and it was unusual for an evening to pass when we were together without Sykes having impersonated a Yorkshire tenant or labourer or soldier, or a dragoman or sheikh or Turkish official. The performance always contained something new, if one may give the name of performance to what he did so simply and unassumingly. It was never twice alike. He could have taken the ordinary degree easily enough if he had set himself to do it, but it never seemed to him worth doing. He seemed to be always looking round the University to see how it might best serve him, and to follow his own conclusions without considering the views of other people or whether his practice were usual or unusual. He seemed to me to do this with great sagacity, and I heard from him many criticisms of University studies and organization which would have been heard with attention in a Senate-House discussion. He was full of acute observation and criticism of everything about him. I remember, for example, that I profited greatly by some observation of his in relation to the work of chaplains in the Boer War. He was surprisingly mature, and in this respect different from the ordinary undergraduate. He had a line of his own in everything. The power of close application to what did not immediately interest him, if he ever had it, was lost before he appeared at Cambridge. He had plenty of purpose, and his aims were serious and worthy. It would be hard to find another instance of a wealthy young man, completely his own master, who lived so simply or held so firmly to high principles. The pleasures purchasable with money had no place in his life, and he pursued his own good way, whether at home or abroad, entirely unmoved by the temptations incidental to his circumstances and leisure. I am inclined to think that Cambridge did a great deal for him. He became intimate with men of great learning and saw how work was done. He was always observant and appreciative, and I know none of these men whom he did not greatly interest or in whom his early death did not occasion unusually deep regret."

King's College preserved such an intellectual ascendancy among the other colleges that of the neighbouring St. Catherine's it was only allowed that "a cat may look at a King," and Jesus men were seldom called into King's circles unless to improve the style of a racing crew. Mark was an exception, and, though a little contemptuous of the academic mind, showed a real friendship for Dr. Montagu James. To admire Dr. James was really a liberal education, for he was equally qualified to step upon the Attic Stage or into the Alexandrine Library or into a Renaissance Cardinalate. He was an entirely novel luminary on Mark's horizon, and Mark, with his instinct for great men, never lost sight of him. He personified miraculous learning, the power of easy knowledge, and slightly Olympian companionship. Dr. James was almost uncanny in the rapidity and sureness of his scholarship. Already legend played like an aureole over his unpuzzled brow. As an Eton boy he had been noticed muttering gutturals of an unknown tongue while reading from what his masters mistook for a book upside down. This proved to be a Coptic Gospel, which Master James translated and sent to Queen Victoria without ceremony. Sir Henry Ponsonby returned the translation to the headmaster, who, being without imagination or Oriental knowledge himself, felt called upon to swish the learned writer for *lèse-majesté*. Dr. James's accuracy in literary detection had enabled him to pick out so many hidden quotations from the lost Gospel of St. Peter that he actually reconstructed the Gospel before it was rediscovered as a whole. His knowledge of mediæval bookmarks had enabled him to catalogue several non-existent libraries which had been scattered since the Reformation. He could not only give the date and diocese of an illuminated missal placed in his hands, but he could often recognize the very handwriting. One of his best monographs, on the Lady Chapel in Ely Cathedral, he actually finished by writing on his knees in the train between Cambridge and Ely. A specimen of Dr. James's learning may be given in a note to Mark (June 12, 1912): "The fragment is from a very fine English Bible of cent. xii. It is the initial of the Book of Obadiah, and represents Obadiah—not really the prophet, but Ahab's steward, who was always identified with the prophet in old times—feeding the prophets of the Lord by fifties in a cave. I believe it would be worth while to take it to the Lambeth Library and see whether it does not conform to MS. 3 there, which is a fine Bible of that date. In that book there is no pictured initial to Obadiah. Possibly yours may be a fragment of that very book. There are few Bibles of the kind about. The big Bible at Winchester Cathedral also seems to have no Obadiah picture."

Dr. James seemed to work outside the usual bounds of time and space, and accordingly he had leisure to entertain those who were wise enough to invite themselves to his rooms. The frequentation of Dr. James's famous suite on the great court at King's was a semi-social educative process known among Old Etonians as "keeping Montem." On the impressionable Mark this process made a great impression. Here was a striking contrast to the official pedant, for Dr. James's rooms were neither didactic nor dreary. Manuscripts and priceless texts often strewed the table amid pipes and siphons, but the humorous yarn and the thrilling ghost story filled the longer pauses. It was often all that Mark's wit could do to keep up with the scintillating conversation; but he generally could say something, and if he could not add to the general knowledge he could let loose his powers of mimicry. Dr. James himself admitted of lighter moments and allowed himself to repeat with exquisite drollery statements attributable to other members of the college corporation. On many a winter's evening, while Mark recited cross-legged on a sofa, twisting and pounding his face to suit each story as he told it, Dr. James could be seen making interminable tea, his thin features laughing noiselessly behind his spectacles—the reserved and rippling laugh of the unvintaged sea. Dr. James used to be most pleased when Mark imitated the Turkish officials. If the man of the world was amazed by the man of the study, the man of the study was amused by the man of the world. "Monty" James made a most pleasing and direct counterbalance to Monte Carlo in Mark's education.

In Dr. James's rooms Mark even learnt something about Thackeray and Dickens, as well as being inspired to search for Greek inscriptions during his Eastern travels. In the Lent term of 1898 he visited the Hauran alone with his Arab servants and discovered an inscription not recorded in the *Corpus*. Though he had been unable to face the Greek test in the "Little Go," he brought back a notebook full of various transcriptions which Dr. James was able to pronounce "astonishingly faithful and intelligent."

In view of his Eastern tastes, Mark made inquiry as to the amount of Arabic instruction provided by the University, and found the celebrated Professor E. G. Browne carrying on the tradition of the ill-fated Palmer. Professor Browne combined a Pembroke fellowship with Persian patriotism, and to him Mark was duly sent. In return for a little Arabic learning, Mark plied his professor with his own strongly shaped views on the East, on which they were generally diametrically opposed. Professor Browne gave Mark credit for the greatest capacity for not learning that he had ever met! Mark was fond of the Socratic method, and elicited a great deal of information about the Moslem world. His views were considerably coloured by reading Burton's translation of the Arabian Nights. At one time he knew text and notes by heart. It was for real investigators such as Mark that they were intended by Burton. With time Mark tended towards Professor Browne's nationalist views, but as an undergraduate he was frankly Imperialist, and inclined to admire the fighting races like the Turks and Anglo-Saxons and to dislike the gentle Persians. It was the old-fashioned Turk he admired, while Jew and Armenian, Greek and Russian fell equally under the shadow of his youthful detestation. The Great War tended to reverse his views, but for the time he adopted views for the sake of having views. In Professor Browne's opinion he had Burton's outlook on the East, though without his amazing knowledge. "Of Wilfred Blunt he was the complete antithesis, for Blunt more than anyone realized the abiding chivalry and romance of the East, while Sykes saw chiefly the comic side. They were as far apart as tragedy and burlesque."

Mark's Lent terms were spent travelling. The Orient had become a second nature to him. His sense of humour, his powers of mimicry, and an occasional flash of genius or wisdom often enabled him to penetrate farther into Eastern matters than a more exact student. If he had become profound he could never have spread his interests over so large an area of history and territory as he did. What little he knew of languages he made go a long way, supplying deficient nouns by means of play acting or semaphoring a missing epithet. In his furious quest for information he was inclined to puzzle and terrify the gentler Asiatic. He could enter into the life, but not always the imagination and idealism, of the East. As he wrote in a letter to the Rev. H. Ward (October 3, 1907): "So you see I have been with rich and poor, feudal lord and bureaucrat, black and white, Christian, Agnostic, Moslem and Pagan, and I have friends among them all."

The result of his journey during 1899 in Kurdistan was published in the following year under the title of "Through Five Turkish Provinces," while the travels of 1898 found a distinguished, if unconsulted, niche in the *Transactions* of the Society of Biblical Archæology. Some letters written to his cousin, Mr. Henry Cholmondeley, the faithful guardian of the Sledmere estate, show that Mark had dealings with more than one learned society at the time:

"My poor landlady died the morning of my arrival, so I had to put up here for the present. I am going into my old room (33 Jesus Lane) to-morrow. Do you think you could send a steed here of some sort, as there is nothing on earth to do? This is what a Cambridge street looks like at present: nothing to be seen but a solitary landlady's cat."

"The mare is very satisfactory, and I must thank you very much for having got her for me. I have been rather busy this last week. Last night I had to read a paper to the Fisher Society (Catholics in residence) on Syria. On Thursday I believe I shall have to lecture to the Cambridge Society of Antiquaries, which will be rather terrible. I should like to start abroad on December 14. My trip would take about two months and a half. I am cutting down expenses as much as possible by getting my baggage at the Military Supply Store, thus reducing travelling expenses to mules and servants, of which, with the light outfit that is to be got, only one-half the number would be required."

"I have just heard from the Royal Geographical Society to tell me that my discovery in Syria is of the greatest importance. My tutor has, in consequence, given me leave to stay down next term if I go abroad. I have every reason to believe that I shall find some extraordinary things in the Safah, the place where I discovered the 'Hill of Bones.' I am the first person who ever entered the place. This was merely because for some reason the natives like me. Would you find out if there is any objection to my starting just before Christmas? Please send me some Sledmere notepaper, as I have written an article on my trip and wish to write to the editor on Sledmere notepaper. I am told this will ensure the insertion of the article."

"My scheme for Syria I want to keep as quiet as possible, but it seems that by gentle hints Cook's people can get me a military escort of six soldiers, which would, with the sheikhs of the tribes, make a totally efficient guard, as the Bedouins are the only dangerous people. Will never attack with the risk of losing horse or man. Therefore the game would not be worth the candle. I hope to start on the 14th of December. Please talk as little about it as possible, as everything depends on the quietness with which I get to Damascus."

The "Hill of Bones" was Mark's pet discovery, and we find a reference in a letter written ten years later to Mr. Bliss at the Syrian College in Beirut (May 3, 1909):

"The bones are a three-acre patch of bones at least ten feet deep—six hours' ride due east of the north end of Jebel Druze in the Safah. They are in the middle of a volcanic patch of lava. The place is called Heberieh. The whole mass of the three acres is of bones, and must represent the remains of many millions of animals. I wrote them up in 1898, in the Palestine Exploration Fund Journal—I reported them to the Natural History Museum, Cambridge—ditto Jermyn Street—ditto Royal Geographical Society—but have never succeeded in attracting attention. Presently a German will mention them in a text-book as his own discovery, and British science will translate the text-book and the world will be informed of the discovery."

Two illustrated scraps to Henry Cholmondeley survive from the journey of 1899 from Jerusalem and Baghdad respectively, the two cities which this impetuous undergraduate was one day to thrill with the proclamations of British entry. He wrote:

"I have arrived safely at Jerusalem after a very uneventful journey, excepting the following incident on the way to Jerusalem: when the train reached a station called Ramleh a shot was fired, and presently a Turkish cavalryman appeared. It turned out that he had had a quarrel with a farmer *two years ago*, and he had been looking for him ever since, found out where he was, obtained leave to go to Ramleh, and shot him in the station; he then gave himself up, saying he had done what he wanted and they might do what they liked.

"When I arrived here the old Sheikh Fellah recognized me and shouted to the crowd that I was his son!"

And from Baghdad (February 23, 1899):

"You will by this time know of the failure I had with the authorities at Damascus and my subsequent alterations of plans.

"I have had most trying weather on my trip; the thermometer has varied in one month from 5° below zero to 90° in the shade, including fogs, snows, sandstorms, and one week's incessant rain.

"I am going up to Mosul, and thence to Batum or Trebizond, but my route will depend on the state of the country, climatic and political. It is useless to tell you all that has happened, as it fills at the least 30 pages of a diary."

"Through Five Turkish Provinces" was published by Bickers in the autumn of 1900. As the *Spectator* remarked: "It is not often that Cambridge undergraduates get leave of absence for Lent term in order to visit Baghdad and Mosul." The reviews were favourable, though the *Christian Commonwealth* was shocked by his reference to the Armenians: "He has no word of compassion to utter. Not a syllable of pity escapes him. His allusions are cold-blooded and indifferent." Mark had found that "even Jews have their good points, but Armenians have none." The book was written in a spirit of youthful frenzy, underlining the comic and exaggerating the grotesque. His apprenticeship to University journalism was still upon him when he described a hired carriage as having "the appearance of a decayed bandbox on a brewer's dray," or thus illustrated the Oriental's perversity: "If you give him a coat, he will either wear it the wrong way about or cut off the sleeves for gaiters and then use the body as an umbrella!"

He had been unable to obtain leave to spend three months in the Syrian desert, but he visited Aleppo, Baghdad, Mosul and Van, coming home by Mount Ararat and Batum. He picked up a good dragoman, Isa Kubrusli, who had previous knowledge of the absurd ways of Europeans, having served Lord Chelmsford in the Abyssinian campaign, accompanied Sir Charles Wilson to Mount Sinai, and afterwards the unfortunate Professor Palmer. Whether he was well entertained or not, Mark was always entertaining in his record. Hasieh he described as the filthiest village he had ever visited. The guest house "consisted of a large heap of offal with four rooms leading off it: the first and best was occupied by the cow; the second, which was not quite so clean, was given to me; in the other two most of the villagers were gathered together to watch what Isa called '*roast whale and potted hyena*,' that is roast veal and potted ham!"

At Aleppo he noted that "nearly everyone I met who was not a native seemed to be trying to get away from the place without success." At Deir he added to his ecclesiastical experiences. "In the evening some Chaldean monks sent a message to tell me they would call the next morning and to warn me not to receive the Armenian Patriarch. They did call, and found me with the Patriarch's vicar, who was warning me not to have any connection with the monks, and on seeing him they speedily retired."

On approaching Mosul "the first thing that struck me was a splendid bridge. It is a fine piece of workmanship, and has only one fault: it does not cross the river. The engineer commenced building it about 170 yards from the bank; he built 24 piers, and at the 24th came to the water. Then, after due consideration, he thought that he would build the bridge with boats, and these he chained to the end of the masonry. Though this structure is useless as a bridge, it makes an excellent rendezvous for beggars, lepers and sweetmeat vendors." This reminds one of the Turkish wag who said: "I built the bridge, and if the river doesn't choose to run under it, that is not my fault!" (Khoja Nasru'd-Din Eperdi.)

He enjoyed the curious experience of being wrecked on Lake Van. "As we were rapidly drifting on to the rocks, I kicked the captain and pointed out what was about to occur." Strange to say, they were rescued by a Turkish horseman, who must have borne some resemblance to the fabled horse marines, for "with the help of a stout whip he made the Armenians tow us down the coast. Before the towing had begun we had already bumped four times and had sprung a considerable leak in the boat; our rudder, too, was carried clean away. Whilst the Armenians towed we did our best to fend ourselves off the rocks, and though we were in a sinking condition we managed to get round the point into a little bay." This was more exciting than a bumping race on the Cam, though the goal of the cruise proved disappointing enough. "Van is a large place, and seems to consist of endless miles of mud houses." A gentleman called Mustafa Arrah came on board among the terrified crew and "suggested a large wolf walking into a monkey's cage." From him Mark learnt that "Lord Raspberry," presumably Rosebery, was staying with the Sultan. So does news travel in Asiatic Turkey. Passing north, Mark visited the mountain indelibly associated with Noah and the bumping of the Ark. "I arrived at the foot of Mount Ararat just at sunrise, and that sunrise I shall never forget, as by good fortune I was at the correct angle to see the sun come up exactly over the peak, which was indeed a beautiful and impressive sight. It is only when the mountain practically eclipses the sun that you fully grasp its enormous bulk."

On the whole he enjoyed his experiences and liked the Turks. "At one time or another I have interviewed four walis, a score of kaimakams and as many mudirs, and whether it was the governor of a province the size of Scotland or the headman of a miserable little mud village, the ceremony was the same." He disliked crossing the frontier. "Regret came over me when I saw the red-roofed Tartar kennel which marked the limits of that disease known as Russia."

The appendix of this now unprocurable book contained, according to Sir Denison Ross, the most perfect records of Levantine English ever taken, with all the appropriate parings of Italian, Arabic and French dropped into the human gramophone.

And at this point Mark's education may be said to be concluded, for on his return he was called upon for active service in South Africa, the official sign that he had attained manhood.

CHAPTER III

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

IT is difficult to say whether Mark's education began or finished with the outbreak of the South African War. As a boy, with a little make-up, Mark had attained sufficient resemblance to Napoleon to encourage him to a military career. In his first Cambridge term he joined the Militia of the Yorkshire Regiment, with which he was connected till his death. The Boer War gave him his first opportunity. He served at Aldershot as A.D.C. to General Montgomery Moore during the winter of 1899. On March 16, 1900, he came of age, and received a silver inkstand from the village of Sledmere. On the following day he sailed in the *Assaye* for the front. It proved a dreary business, during which he learnt with the British Army some crafts of war not previously mentioned in military handbooks. The Boer, ensconced on his kopje, proved a singular puzzle to the Duke of Cambridge's own little army. Against the Duke's military school Mark was one of the first to revolt. Typical was the Duke's preface to a lecture given at Aldershot on foreign cavalry—that, as the British cavalry was the best in the world, there was no need to know what it was like on the Continent. The Boer cavalry was generally appraised as a Wild West show commanded by Nonconformist elders.

Mark was probably as well prepared for the campaign as any officer in the field. He had written the previous year to Henry Cholmondeley from Homs: "I have a good horse. He would surprise you; bent forelegs, bad shoulders, light flanks, and yet, weighing in my overcoat fourteen stone, I rode him twenty-one hours with three hours' break yesterday, and at the end he had to be hobbled with all four legs because he was so savage. I fear you may think me extravagant, and after all these years of hearing a certain person explaining how easy it is with the greatest economy to waste two or three hundred thousand, you may think me the same; but to prove to you I am not, I have been living on the ground without a tent for the last fifteen days and eating the veriest garbage: but I think you believe in me and so keep up my spirits."

In the following year he was repeating Asiatic experiences in Africa. His opinion in later life was that "it was very useful training to one brought up in easy circumstances to spend twelve months in a blockhouse with seventy workmen and doing manual labour. . . . My men were mostly from Middlesbrough, and trade unionists. I was mentioned in dispatches for work done in field fortifications, and for this again I have to thank the library at Sledmere. When I was a little boy I made myself familiar with the field-work manuals of the eighteenth century; and, when the Boers had lost all their artillery, eighteenth-century field-works were the very thing, out of date against a modern army with artillery, but perfectly sound against ordinary rifle fire. I adopted in the Boer War most of the hints I had picked up from Marshal Saxe's 'Art of War,' 1740." He also introduced an improvement in rations. A gunner visiting his blockhouse reported that Mark secured the best natives for twenty miles round to work for him by giving them a mixture of water, whisky and Worcestershire sauce!

Mark spent wearisome days guarding Barkly Bridge, training Kaffirs, pursuing telescopically visible Boers, reading the English classics or dreaming of the East. So strong was the Oriental mirage in his imagination that he saw the Turk in "Tommy" and the outlines of minarets in the chimneys of Bloemspruit, otherwise "Paradise Lost." He wrote long letters full of savage, bitter, humorous criticism. His only pæan was devoted to the humble Militiaman, whose epic or epitaph he wrote in a semi-sublime outburst. He certainly set "Thomas Smith, draper's assistant, Oxford Street," above generals, staff officers and the Jewish Outlanders for whom the war was being chiefly fought. Had the Swiftean occasion arisen, perhaps English literature might have been enlivened by new Drapier or Draper's letters from the veldt. He relieved himself by Oriental or mediæval outbursts. Allah! is ever on his tongue, and his letters are all signed in Arabic. He brings himself to smite the Boer as "the infidel." He insists on the Eastern sanitary code amongst his men. He becomes a fatalist, like Gordon and most Christian gentlemen who stray long in the East. When his dear subaltern dies he writes: " Such was his *Kadehr* which is engraven on all our foreheads." In the midst of surrounding dust and drunkenness he reconstructs the atmosphere of the Passion Play in the ages of faith. He discovers the Kaffirs playing a game called *Tria* exactly as he learnt to play it in the East, and he traces its Arabic descent via Zanzibar to Johannesburg. " The game has travelled where no men could," he writes with the acumen of a true folk-lorist. He reads the part of Falstaff to his men, and pens a Shakespearean skit on the conquered unconquerable Krüger. He criticizes Kipling's verses about the " Blood River Bridge " from the realist's point of view. He declares his opinions loudly at all times. He professes much contempt for " the first gentleman in Birmingham " and some political hate for Winston Churchill. Lord Lansdowne rouses him, for delaying the peace of 1902, to the same fury with which others were furious when Lord Lansdowne sought peace in 1917. But the souls of all men contain their own antipodes. " Gentleman Joe " had been a Radical, Winston was to become one, and Mark himself was to modify or change his views, whether on West or East, before his *Kadehr* was known to his fellow-men.

He writes to Alfred Dowling from Barkly Bridge:

June 24, 1900.

It is rather provoking, reading your inspiriting account of what I may be doing and what I am doing. My business is to guard a bridge with fifty men, sleep ten hours, read eight hours, and eat, drink and smoke the rest of the twenty-four. This war and all its questions are too hopelessly involved for me to discuss; my opinions are as follows:

1. Boers are beasts.
2. British colonists are liars or Jews.
3. British soldiers are splendid.
4. African farmers who wanted to rise and didn't dare are skunks.
5. S.A. is a desert.
6. The war was necessary to maintain prestige in other quarters.

Against a European force in England of half the size again, the S.A. Field Force would have proved the most splendid and unconquerable army ever beheld. A good deal, I see, is being talked of Baden Powell and proposals that he should reorganize the Army. Why because a man has successfully held a small outpost against an incompetent enemy he should be capable of reorganizing an efficient army, I do not know. A curious thing I have noticed is that the men are beginning to look like our dear old friends the "unspeakable": a fez would complete them.

And to Miss Edith Gorst from Port Elizabeth:

July 1, 1900.

The time is weary and passes slow, we get no news, and expect to be here for months; there is a report that we may go to garrison Koomasi, or that we may go to China. I care little now where we go, though I should enjoy China more than any other place; life here is as uneventful as it can well be. I can think of nothing to tell you, there is a dust storm, there is a clanging wooden door, there are ridiculous tea-parties, with infernal men and atrocious women; everyone here talks as though he were brought up in Whitechapel. I am in a foul humour; everyone else is. We all quarrel and rage from dawn till dark. There are no duties. I hope in two weeks to return to my bridge, which will kill another two weeks, then back here and four weeks after that two months will have elapsed and INSHALLAH! We go home then.

August 8, 1900.

The Colonials and Outlanders are hateful and detestable, they talk money all day long. I saw an old *Daily Mail*. In one part of it it damned the Chinese for not being afraid of dying, just as these people damn the Boers for not selling land because they don't want money. Mind you I'm not a pro-Boer. They seem just one degree viler than the Outlanders. When shall I get away? I have a grand scheme for a journey through Turkey, Persia, and Russia; I am reading it all up to be prepared to start the moment I can. O for the East, the East and real feelings. *Allah! Ho Akbar, Din we el Mohamad!* There fighting is real fighting, blind healthy rage and fury! Here it's stealth and dodging, nothing else! and also unending.

September 10, 1900.

There has never been a period, I think, when we have had so few statesmen. The only great figures that we can call to mind are Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery, and Sir William Harcourt; of these three two are decayed old men, leaving a man who, though in some respects a fine type of British Premier, has a certain feebleness and lack of initiative, which is unsatisfactory. The rest are a mere herd of fatuous babblers, pompous bores, polished weaklings, or self-advertising tradesmen. Never in the last hundred and twenty years has there been a time when a weak ministry has not been instantly assailed by a virile, fierce and conquering opposition. Never has there been a war when the peace party was composed of such wretched specimens as the present one. Every war in which we have been engaged has been vigorously opposed by a few. So it is now, but what a difference; compare the opposition to the Napoleonic wars and the supporters of it. Pitt for it, Fox against. The Crimea, Lord Palmerston for it, Cobden and Bright against. The Boer war of '82, the great (then) Conservative Party for it, Gladstone against. Compare, I ask you, Chamberlain with Pitt, Palmerston or the Conservative Party of '82. And if you can without smiling, compare Fox, Cobden, Bright or Gladstone with Stead and Clark and LABBY!!!! It would seem as if Lord Salisbury were the last of a long and illustrious line; think of his predecessors. And as it is in politics, so is it in letters. Every war since 1700 has been an accepted opportunity for poets and writers. What can we say to our modern productions? Compare Stead's vapourings with Swift's "Conduct of the Allies," "The Absent Minded Beggar" with "The Charge of the Light Brigade," Napier's "Peninsular War," with Winston Churchill's "London to Pretoria." Not that I blame or criticize the latter, but I only ask you to compare it, as the ablest book on the subject. In no direction do we seem to shine, nowhere do we see tremendous genius; the people even seem apathetic and luxurious. The Empire seems a vast, splendid edifice, built by Titans and inhabited by pygmies. The only spot in which successful genius appears is in the ranks of Journalism, vapid, sensational, ephemeral.

September 17, 1900.

The Boers grow slowly fewer and fewer, and, as I have said before, we shall wake up one day and find no Boers left, and the war will be over; not that that would mean we should go home. O dear no! They will find the Militia so useful, probably, in building farms for the returned prisoners, or, if there is a dearth of Kaffir labour, to dig the mines for the Jews at Johannesburg!

To HENRY CHOLMONDELEY.

August 5, 1900.

I want to make my next trip really well and propose to write a really decent book upon it. If I could do so successfully I might then have some hopes of standing for Parliament, a thing I shall never do until I am known to a certain extent. I can see that it is absolutely necessary to prove that I am an individual of fairly balanced mind, owing to all the rows and scandals which have taken place in the last few years. Otherwise the impression would be that I may be a hopeless fool or a worthless scoundrel. I may be one or both, for one never knows oneself, but I wish to prove that I am neither. To be successful one must show oneself in the best light. I wish to be known as a person fairly versed in Eastern affairs, which I shall try to be, but even if I am not, I may contrive to make people think I am, which is half the battle.

August 23, 1900.

I enclose you a map covering my proposed journey. You had better show my father the map. It might interest him. Also, could you find out whether it is possible to post from Tashkent to Omsk in a reasonably short time, say, twelve or eighteen days? Beck has sent me the proofs of my book, with which I am satisfied, but regret I had so short a time to write it in. Practically I did it in three weeks. Now that I have written a book, I can see how much better a one my next will be. When I have done that I shall be able to look around me and see what I can do. I hope my father will put no obstacles in the way, as it is really important that I should take a distinct line of my own.

To Alfred Dowling.

October 14, 1900.

I have not heard from you for a long while. I, as you see, have moved up country with my regiment, and am now in command of an outpost remarkable for its stinks, as it is the Dumping Ground for Dead Horse. I think that you would not be very happy here, as your love of "Beasties" and the Beautiful would somewhat clash with the surroundings. Someone said this was a land of birds without song, rivers without water, men without honour and women without beauty. It is perfectly true. I am glad to say the Outlanders must now serve as soldiers if they wish to get back to their beloved mines. Thank goodness they will gain nothing by this war.

November 20, 1900.

El Mahdi and the poor dead dervishes must be laughing now. The Northumberland Fusiliers whom they charged so splendidly were all taken prisoners early in the war.

How horribly shocked we are at the "Boeren" using expansive bullets except against people who couldn't hit back with them, and besides, they were so ridiculously brave that if we hadn't, we should have had to have fought them hand to hand, and that would never do! Talking of bravery, it reminds me of the abuse our people pour on the wicked Boers, who, just because we happen to have bayonets and they haven't, won't wait for us to charge them but gallop away. Why, such cowardice as that is as contemptible as the infatuation of the wicked dervishes. Our commander here is Colonel Long. Now I think either he is atrociously treated or we are. If he lost the guns through his own fault—well, it is scandalous that we should be under command of an incompetent officer in whom one cannot have confidence; and if he didn't lose the guns through his fault—well, it is more than brutal not to say so. It's wrong either way.

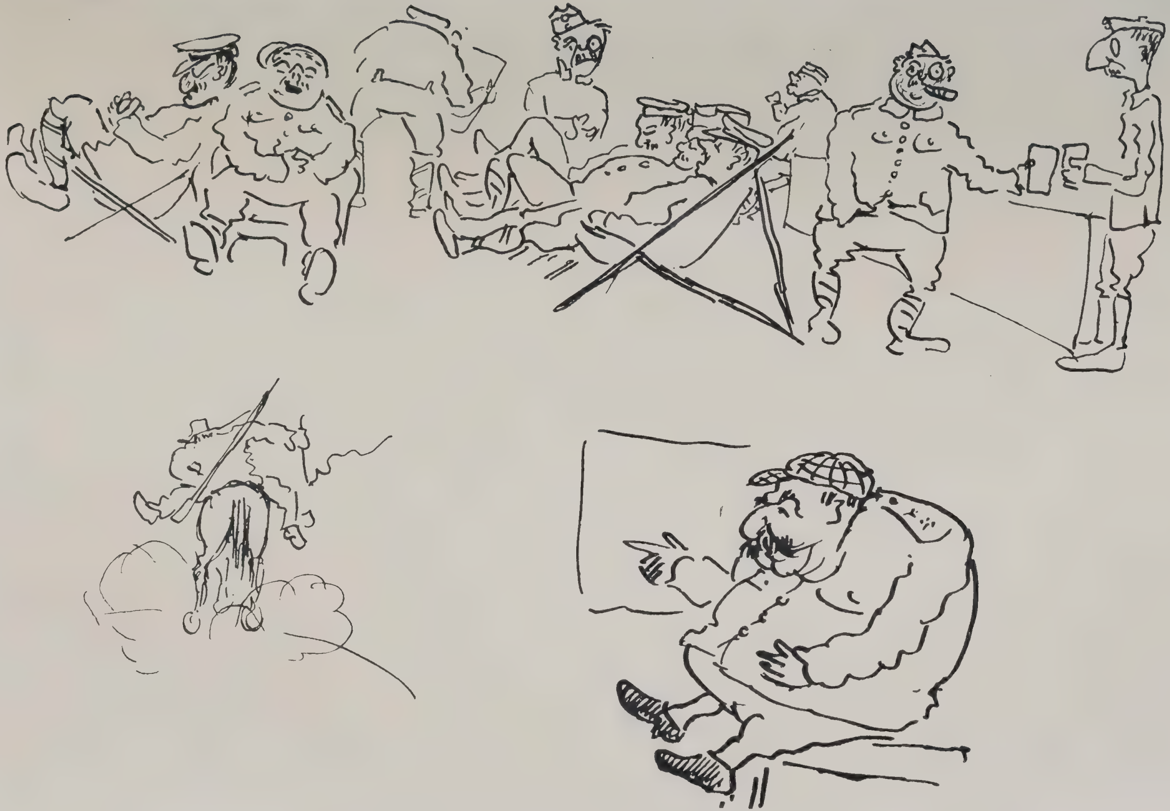
To Miss Edith Gorst.

December 1, 1900.

By the way, a marvellous change has come over everything here since I wrote twenty-four hours ago. Last night the whole town was in a ferment, orderlies galloping, officers cursing, piquets marching, patrols challenging, everyone in a fearful fluster. This morning everyone was afoot at 5 A.M. digging trenches, and working like devils. I had to go into town, and at twelve o'clock found the club absolutely deserted. Usually it is full, but to-day not one single creature did I espy. What do you suppose had happened?

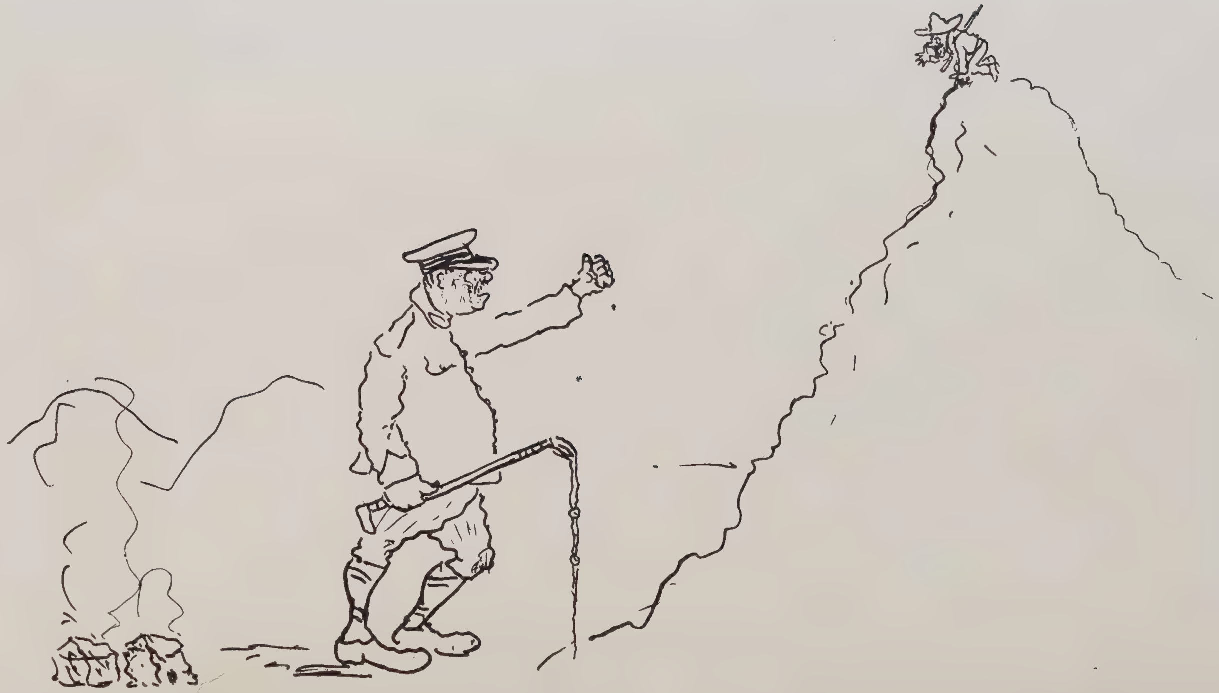
WHY, KITCHENER HAD JUST ARRIVED!

And every incompetent was for once minding his work. O Kitchener must indeed be a man. He will not for one instant tolerate the idle, useless, or stupid. Every mistake is followed by swift retribution. How they fear him! How they hate him! And above all he is not a snob. I can tell you there is a hot time coming for everyone. Boers and troops will suffer, but I think the war won't last long



SOUTH AFRICAN WAR SKETCHES.

1. Before Kitchener came. 2. Boer telescopically visible. 3. An inspecting General.



BR—SH G—L. LOOK HERE! CONFOUND YOU I'VE BURNT YOUR FARM AND BY GAD SIR IF YOU DON'T SURRENDER I - I - I'LL send YOU TO ST HELENA!

THE LAST STAGE OF THE BOER WAR.

if he has a free hand. He is no genius, but he is (thank God) a brute, and that is what you want in a war when geniuses do not happen to exist.

To Henry Cholmondeley from Rhenoster Bridge.

December 30, 1900.

At last we have had a fight, it was not a grand affair; but at any rate we have been under fire, and so can wear the medal without shame. The scheme was to "surprise" a force of the enemy reported by the scouts between 30 and 300 strong. They were known to have been on a certain wooded hill for four months. About ten minutes after I got the order I noticed that a small red rag had been tied on the end of a stick and hoisted on the top of a reservoir. I calculated that it would be visible through a telescope from the enemies' position. I had it taken down, and was told by a Kaffir that it was a native signal meaning "enemy on the move." Who put it up we never knew. However, I joined the column at eight o'clock, just as the moon went down, after which we started with great *éclat*. Our movements were shrouded in the deepest mystery, and the forward march commenced. Slowly through the dust and gloom the conquering column wended its way, onward, ever onward. After about one hour's march we came to a sudden halt. We had lost our way! Did this daunt us? Never! We threw out outposts and prepared to await until dawn. Suddenly a voice in the darkness hailed, "Halt, who comes there?" And who do you think it was? Why, the sentry on the camp we had started from!

The serial description of this encounter continued in a letter to Dowling:

January 1, 1901.

However, at three next morning we made a fresh start. Of course, by this time the Boeren got wind of what was afoot, and when we arrived at the fatal kopje, we saw through our glass the enemy. one strong, in full flight, the remainder, of course, having sheered off about two hours before our arrival. That night we remained on the kopje, and the next morning set out to return, but we had reckoned without our friends the Boeren, and no sooner did we start than pop ! pop ! br-r-rup-up-rattle-popopwhizz-pt-put-pt-tew-ew-ew-pt-Brrupupup began on our rear and right flank, so we had a rearguard action to fight. We were forced to go back as we had no provisions. We had a frightful rush. As the infantry did the rearguard and were unduly hustled, we got some bullets in our direction and a man was shot in the lung near me, also a young gunner officer got a very nasty wound in the head. Just before he was hit he told me that he thought the Boers were wasting ammunition, poor fellow !

Of course I am sure you are puzzled about the farm-burning question. Well, I am sure you are one of the few people who can take an un-Exeter Hall and un-*Daily Mail* view of the question, for Exeter Hall says : Burning farms ? Don't talk to me ! Disgraceful ! Help ! Help ! Stop it at once ! Don't do that ! Help ! Help ! While the *Daily Mail* says :

Burning Boers' Barn !
Foemen Flee Flames !
Clery's Clearing Tactics !

They're both hysterical and neither in the right. This is my view, and if you were here I think it would be yours. Firstly, this is a damnable and unnecessary war. The country isn't worth a brass ha'penny, but for our credit's sake we must keep it, and if we keep it must hold it. To hold it the Boer must be squashed. In former days if people could make powder you couldn't squash them, but as they can't make Mauser ammunition it is possible. Now a Boer farm is a supply depôt : for the evening it is a comfort to him. If we could garrison every Boer farm we needn't burn them ; but as that would require about a million men, it is out of the question. Therefore with every kindness and gentility you must bring in the women and children, and such men as you can, and burn the farm.

Early in 1901 he wrote:

Here I am, still alive! Please remember the Boggart is pretty tough, and lives in a very healthy way.

1. He does not eat swine's flesh.
2. He touches no forbidden liquors.
3. He drinks no unboiled water.
4. He never washes before or after sunset.
5. He makes his men obey the laws of the Bedawi as regards sanitation.
6. He does not mind the stink he can smell, but dreads the one he can't smell and looks for it.
7. He has, *Allamdolilaj* (praise be to God), an excellent constitution.
8. He never sleeps more than six hours, and feels as fit as a fiddle.

I do wish you were here. I am having great fun, and now, having made up my mind I shall be here another year, am enjoying myself as much as possible! I am managing my Kaffirs with great success, and have not had to whip one since the first example. They are really rather nice people (I like them better than Englishmen), but, hush! what dreadful blasphemy have I whispered? They cheer me every morning, and volunteer to work for me. I give them a good pinch of snuff every other evening, and watch them while they work. They are different to Arabs, as they continually roar with laughter.

I have made some grand fortifications here, and I think the post is now impregnable against anything under 600 Burghers. The local Boer leader is a charming Frenchman, who gives cigarettes to all the prisoners he takes, as well as a very good luncheon, dinner or breakfast, after which he sends them in stark naked. This morning a poor old man aged 86 came in with his head cut by my wire entanglements; he was an English soldier, and fought the Boers at Bloemfontein under Sir Harry Smith. He remained here as a farmer, and was shot in the thigh by a Maxim bullet when some "Boeren" tried to hold his farm; but he says he bears us no ill-will as we turned the fellows out. I tied his head up, gave him coffee, and he is at present sitting on the only chair in camp. I am sending him into the refugee camp this morning, where, according to Stead, I understand the British Brutal Butchers outrage the women and sjambok the men. The Boer refugees are left entirely to themselves, and get a larger ration than the soldiers. The only time they meet our men is at a cricket match.

I have trained the blacks of the section, and with the result that this section is the only one in which the black line-watchers have not either fired on their own people or turned mutinous. For reward I have received kicks more than halfpence, endless correspondence, and fought with everyone all round, but I have had a revenge grotesque and glorious. At my own expense I have put all my blacks into staff caps. No one can object! How I wait for the day when that vile old general comes round to inspect them. Thank God he has no sense of humour, or it would only amuse him. The blacks, of course, are as proud as can be of their head-dress, and I shriek with laughter whenever I see them. Anything more incongruous than a smart general's cap and their appalling rags cannot be conceived.

February 26, 1901.

Yah illah! Death to the infidel! Three nights ago we smote the "Boeren" hip and thigh. It was in this way. About midnight the big gun on the hill opened fire on a place where some Boers were supposed to be. I turned out with my merry men, and fired volley after volley at the place where the shells were bursting. Now comes the comic portion of the story. The gunners on the hill were wrongly informed, but between the place where the shells burst and my men there were 200 Boers crawling up to the bridge, and by a chance, 1 in 2,000,000, my bullets fell just on top of them and *slew* eight. We know this because we found pools of blood there and the Kaffirs saw them buried, and returned in great glee to tell us. You see, the gunners were shooting at the wrong place and hit it, while we shot at the wrong place and hit the right one, and the joke is I only fired to amuse the men and thought nothing was there.

February 29, 1901.

I recommence my letter. O, did I tell you about the blockhouses? When Ld. K. of K. ordered Block Houses, some were built by common civilians, others by the Royal Engineers; the common civilians (of course, the poor fools could do no better) built ordinary blockhouses as they were ordered. These I can see no great merit in. True, they turn bullets, are good to shoot through and afford a pleasant shelter, but who could not do that? However, the Royal Engineers, true to their admirable traditions, have built three which have suffered the following fates: No. 1 took twice as long to build as the civilian-built blockhouses (owing to the amount of brains brought to bear), and—O how shall I tell you—it fell down in a thunderstorm just as it was completed.

No. 2. Built on a river bank; in order that it might not fall down it was built twice as solidly as the first, but, alas and alack the day, it was so heavy that it weighed down the bank, and the bank and the blockhouse sailed gaily into the river.

No. 3 fell down before it was finished. Of course a little accident like that is of no account—but the war costs £2,000,000 a week all the same.

March 12, 1901.

We have had now six days of solid drizzling, pouring, pattering, plashing, sputtering, drenching rain. My camp is a swamp, the river a torrent, the veldt a marsh. I am dressed in anything I can get hold of, and as now at night it is bitterly cold I present a curious spectacle going round and glaring into the darkness for Boers. Last night in the middle of this infernal rain two rockets went up, and consequently we had to turn out. What was our rage when we were told by telephone that they were practising at the next station and that there was no attack. When the men heard the rockets were only for practice, as they scrambled into their tents one said. "Ow, next time they celebriate de Wet's buthday mebbe they'll tell uz afore-and."

Rhenoster Bridge.
April 1, 1901.

The fever here (*Al-Hamdolillah*) is abating, though this week has been marred by a very gloomy incident: poor Dorman who was my subaltern here died after four days of it. But such was his *kadehr*, which is engraven on all our foreheads. He is gone, a little while people lament, grass grows over a little plot of earth in Kroonstadt, and so—*khalas!*

May 15, 1901.

I really thought I was in for it, but the destroying angel took Howard and Monckton instead of me. I am very fatalistic, and think that it is your fate and nothing can alter it by a minute. General Tucker put in an appearance this morning, such a comic old figure in a civilian cap. I had a long talk with him, and he and his staff roared with laughter the whole time, particularly at my latest piece of fortification, which I must admit is rather bizarre. I will describe it to you. The Royal Engineers built a watch-tower, but omitted to put a roof on it. I brought my renowned genius on to it at once; I discovered an old Kaffir cooking-pot (or cauldron), which I placed on top upside down. The three legs look rather funny sticking up in the air. It is quite bullet proof, and affords good shelter however, and shields the observer from the foe!

From Burghersdorp Hospital he wrote to Dowling:

February 9, 1902.

I am writing to you lest you should have been alarmed by hearing of our railway accident. The smash happened this wise: 150 of our men were ordered to hold a certain portion of the line, expecting the Boers to cross. After holding it for four days the General conceived that the Boers were not going to cross and sent the men back. On the way back some Boers fired at their train. Train retired. Armoured train hearing the firing rushed forward, smashed into 3rd Yorks train. Result: eight men killed, twenty-nine severely injured, wounded by Boers one.

I suppose officially this is rather a success.

February 20, 1902.

Well, the news of this week consists of a series of mishaps which are being kept very dark, though doubtless you have heard all about them in England. O how sick I am of this life, with its senseless follies; how tedious this war is, and how it has lost all *raison d'être!* Why they didn't take Botha's terms in 1901 I can't conceive. But they didn't, and are reaping the harvest of their folly.

What alone raised his enthusiasm was the Militia, who seemed to have accepted the Evangelical injunction to be content with their pay, and his pen-panegyric may be serviceable to the future historian:

June 6, 1900.

Another thing that is marvellous and interesting is the spirit and temper of the Militia. These men are not soldiers, they are not educated bank clerks as the Volunteers, they have no sense of glory, but an immense sense of humour, an inordinate love of liquor, and a vast conceit of themselves. They require a good deal of handling, and with care can be made to work wonders.

February 9, 1902.

You have never seen a Militia regiment, I am sure, and they are volunteers, labouring men, common artisans, who merely came out because they were asked, who never got a cheer or so much as a band to see them off, whose pay is the splendid sum of 1s. 3d. per day, and who so far have left eighty of their carcases behind to fructify the soil of S.A., and who up to the present time have never had more than two nights in bed out of four, who have done two years' arduous service and never complained from the beginning. Most of them are married and many have lost their work, and a gracious country will reward them at the end with a ten-pound note. They are unknown and unnoticed, unadvertised and unloved. And besides all this, never required doles of 5s. per day or any other extra incentive. They have been subject to the same discipline as the line, and have done the same work, they have seen the Yeomen who came out relieved, they have seen their brothers in Volunteers relieved, they have seen the Australians, Colonials and Mercenaries receiving 5s. per day, 7s. per day, and relieved; they have seen black scouts receive 2s. 6d. per day, yet they have not complained; they have held their stretch of line, they have borne the nerve-shattering night-watching, they have toiled in the blazing sun, they have escorted the weary convoys, and here they are Militiamen, unpressed volunteers, and cost only 1s. 3d. per day. Rather curious people, aren't they? Bedouins are the irregular type of men. If you taught Sheik Ali to shoot with a Mauser you would not require to teach him much else; he has eyesight, cunning, ferocity, meanness, slimness, courage, horse-craft, veldt-craft, endurance, perspicacity, horsemanship, and wiry strength. But Thomas Smith, draper's assistant, Oxford Street, has none of these things most probably, and therefore if he shoots like Sir Henry Holford he has still much to learn before he is the slightest use. He might see a flock of birds come screaming out of a wood, but do you suppose that would convey anything to him? You will then understand that there is more in an irregular than good shooting, which seems to be Conan Doyle's idea.

March 25, 1902.

What do you think of the Jap. Alliance? I always laugh when I see our papers saying: "Japan who has so quickly adopted European civilization——" "Japan, now one of the powers, so lately emerged from primitive barbarism. . . ." It is so absurd, but some people are such dunces that they always conceive civilization as being a mixture of dirt, rags, money and whirling wheels, and Maxim guns.

If Socrates came to life, crammed a pot-hat on his head, and squeezed his feet into side-spring boots, the daily papers would say: "This remarkable old savage showed an unexpected appreciation of the benefits of modern civilization, and, discarding his absurd and primæval garments, dressed himself in a manner befitting his position; we have great hopes that the transition will not be merely skin deep and that in a few months he will be able to express himself in thought and deed as an educated and civilized man." I have never been able to see why sleeping on a soft bed, travelling at great rates of speed, eating good food, or wearing ugly clothes should make a man more or less civilized. You have been doing all these things for the last two years, I, barring the clothes, have not, yet I take it we are both just as civilized, neither more nor less. But nearly every Englishman believes that these things mean civilization, and are not merely matters of comfort and convenience, but great fundamentals. I think that you get a stupider and more uneducated man from the modern English Public School than any other place in the world (I am excepting Eton). Take any one of them you meet out here, no knowledge, beyond games, no interests. I saw a company of three who sat at table, and can you conceive that not one of them knew who was the author of "Nicholas Nickleby"!

Some years later, with the entry of the Haldane scheme, we find Mark writing to an officer of the Yorkshire Regiment:

March 19, 1907.

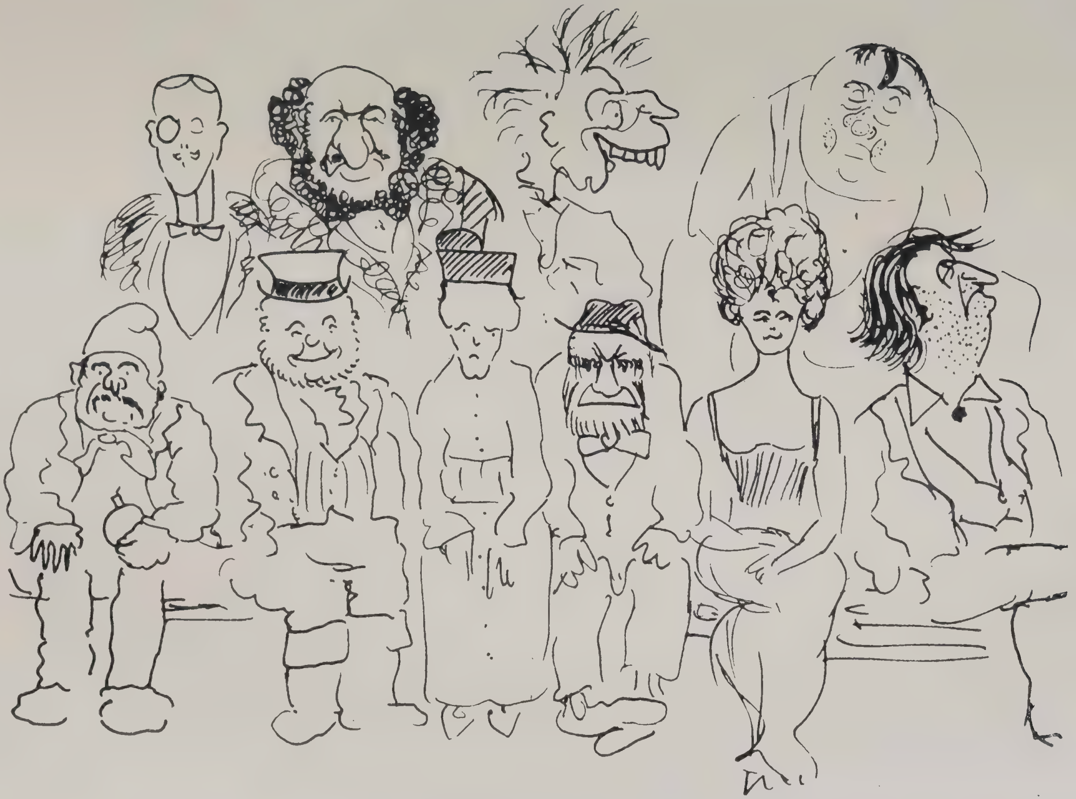
I wonder if any regular is going to write the funeral oration of the Militia, which in brief will be: For two centuries the Militia has provided the line with recruits; for two centuries it has been mocked, neglected and hated. It provided 80,000 men for the South African War. A grateful commander-in-chief said it was a source of anxiety to him. A grateful ministry held its peace. A grateful Army Council has abolished it, and a philosophic War Minister, taking into consideration the fact that prejudice, ignorance, tradition and folly make its regeneration impossible, concurs in the necessity of its disappearance, as indeed do I.

During the discomforts of the war his mind must have strayed sometimes to the courts and fountains, the intellectual camaraderie and philosophic ease of Cambridge. A letter of his to Dr. James survives:

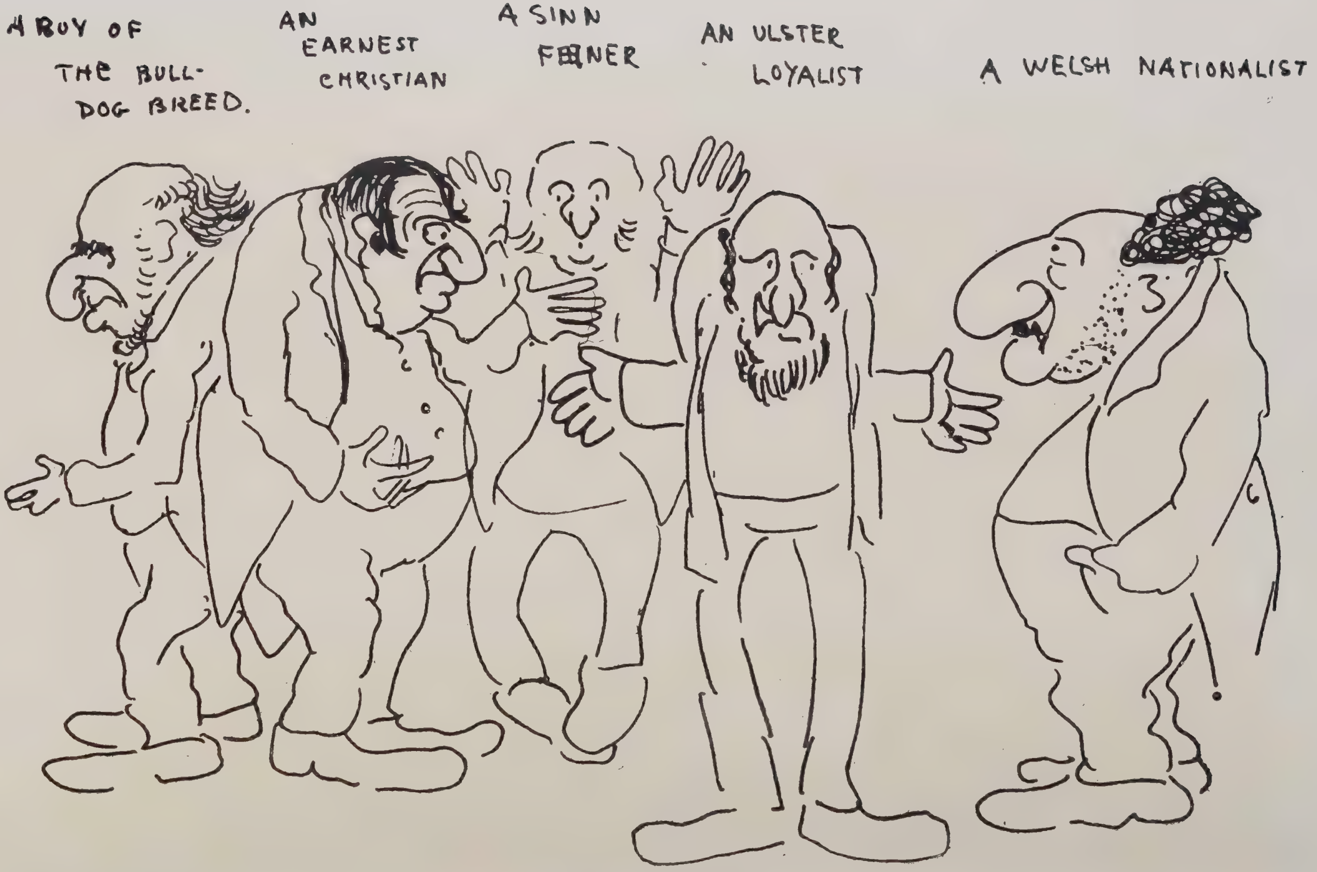
> I am still alive (or rather was when this letter was penned and *Inshallah!* shall be when you receive it). I wrote to you some year ago. (By the way, what year is it now?) Well, anyhow, I wrote to you in the electioneering years of the last century, and have been waiting for an answer ever since. Naturally I never got one, and doubtless shall not get one to this epistle, yet I live in hopes. Isa wrote to me the other day and informed me I was his father and mother, and congratulated me on my (?) brilliant victory over the Boers. I am stationed in the heart of the enemies' country, but the enemy are very discreet, and have only fired at me twice in eight months, though I on the contrary have fired at them about twenty-five times, in the dark, when we could hear them galloping. I am excessively untidy, as you may believe, but am very comfortable, have 3,000 good cigarettes, and a good library ranging from Swift to Marion Crawford. That and the Boers make time pass fairly quickly. I have had unending conflicts with everyone in authority, have lampooned the general, exposed the Royal Engineers, and arrested civilians. I also fed twenty-four Boer babies and their twelve mammas for two days on bully beef, condensed milk, and biscuit pap. Besides this I have had a job after mine own heart, viz. training Basutos to act as armed night watchers on the line. I have drilled and trained eighty-six all told. I found a cart whip, Isa's English, florid gestures, and ginger and Worcester sauce had most admirable effects. I have thirty-five in hand now. Whenever they drill I make them sing their war songs, and the final charge in the attack is very impressive.

The war concluding, Mark returned to Sledmere with honours on May 16, 1902. His father came down from Yorkshire to meet him, and an escort of mounted tenantry waited upon him at Fimber. As the railway was blocked by an accident at Malton,

- The P. R. Front bench -



PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.


A BOY OF THE BULL-DOG BREED.
AN EARNEST CHRISTIAN
A SINN FEINER
AN ULSTER LOYALIST
A WELSH NATIONALIST

THE DIASPORA.

Mark drove home in an open carriage with postilions, headed by a band, into Sledmere. In June his majority was celebrated with a supper-ball, the Right Hon. James Lowther taking the chair, and a silver cup was presented by the tenants, bearing the legend :

Presented to
CAPTAIN MARK SYKES
by the tenantry
on the Sledmere estate
to commemorate his coming of age
on the
16*th day of March* 1900.
This presentation was deferred on account of his two years' absence serving his country during the Boer War in South Africa.
Sledmere, June, 1902.

By all accounts the fête which followed might have been reflected from a novel of Disraeli. Flags and evergreens mingled with mirror-panels and gilded tritons in gigantic marquees. Mark was of age, a returned traveller and a military veteran. A career was now obviously the next step.

CHAPTER IV

THE EAST

MARK'S first recollection in life was riding a camel, and he cherished the desire thenceforth to become an explorer. In November, 1902, he set out for the East with John Hugh Smith, with whom he travelled 1,600 miles before he returned in August, 1903. He succeeded in mapping some unknown country and collecting materials for his next book. Just as during the war, he remained in weekly correspondence with Miss Edith Gorst, to whom the following letters were written, on his way East:

November 3, 1902.

I have now been on this condemned old rattletrap for five days and have still to do another eight. Now this morning, as the ship was pitching a little, I jammed my back against the wall to shave, and was getting on pretty well, when, behold! the wall opened and set me sitting, with a shaving-brush in one hand and a razor in the other, in the middle of two Greek ladies in light attire; the wall was a door leading into the next cabin. Pray, my dear Fortune-in-yourself, excuse the handwriting as the vibration is considerable. This ship is rather like the *Bolivar* in Kipling's ballad, " just a pack of rotten plates puttied up with tar." I am glad to say that at Piræus sixty of the too utterly unendurable passengers will evacuate the ship. I have at present a French stable-companion who suffers considerably from the jaculation of the sea.

November 20, 1902.

I have had an interview with Nazim Pacha, who seems wonderfully amenable, and has put no difficulties in the way. This was off my own bat, as Cook's agent advised me to start without permission and to take him. It now appears that Cook's agent wanted to make some notes on the Palmyra road for the purpose of starting a carriage service there for tourists, and he wanted me to provide him with a carriage free of charge and also to go in secret that he might not be interfered with. He will be rather sick when he sees the escort. The weather has been absolutely beastly, there is no other word for it; pouring with rain, which in the East (which is run on fine weather principles) means destruction or filth. By the way, the British Consul's *cavass* is a disgrace to England.

To Professor Browne he wrote from Beyrout:

November 20, 1902.

I am writing to you from here to tell you that I have made the acquaintance of one who cannot fail to be useful to you in your quest for your paragon, whom I fear you will find it difficult to discover. The person who will prove useful to you is the Rev. Howard Bliss, President of the American College, Beyrout. Now, pray do not fly into a passion crying damn science! A curse on false progress! To hell with shop clothes and a-cockney-slang-instead-of-poetry-and-a-knowledge-of-your-own-classics! For the Rev. Howard Bliss is the most broad-minded and learned of men; although not an Orientalist, he knows a great deal about the country, and if there was such an individual as you require to be found he would find him not from but through his pupils. John Hugh Smith has now got ideas of reforming the East, which is rather tedious but will doubtless pass away. He wants to try Hasheesh and says it will be a new emotion. I think I shall let him, particularly as the soda-water is not of the same excellent and hot-copper-cooling brand as at Cambridge. It will cure him of any other dangerous investigations he may wish to perpetrate. O ye hammering anvils!

O ye clanging smithies! O ye piercing broad-awls! O ye throbbing tomtoms! What a headache he will get! He went into the Khan-es-Zeit the other day at Damascus and was shown round by an old fool called Haji Ali. It was only when Haji Ali proposed breaking by force into the women's quarters that it dawned on John that the Reverend Haji was as drunk as the metaphorical lord. I laughed till I cried watching the two going round the Khan, followed by about twenty blackguard boys. We start for the desert in about six days.

The fruit of this journey appeared in 1904 in a book called "Dar-ul-Islam" (the Home of Islam), with an introduction by Professor Browne, who commended it as "full of acute observation and devoid of cant." A selection of these observations serves all purposes of biography. The reader seldom fails to learn something about the East or about the writer from each page. "Murray's 'Handbook to Syria' says, with a throb in its voice, Syria is a land of ruins and the ruins are increasing every day. Of course they are. Orientals have a habit of building afresh, but never of repairing." A railway accident occurred in spite or because of the French officials. Our philosopher observed: "Whenever a Frenchman has performed any particularly foolish act or exposed his incompetence in some strangely obvious manner, the disastrous consequences are attributed to *force majeure*. An Englishman usually calls it Providence." He corrected Burton's comparison of the Bedouin to the Red Indians. The Arabs he found courteous, humane, sober, bad shots and scouts. The redskins were the reverse, and tents their only characteristic in common. The Bedouin were happily unamenable to civilization, "for they attained reason in the days of Job's early prosperity and are not to be caught with chaff. In this they resemble the Houyhnhnms. They have been described in a charming and truthful manner by Lady Anne Blunt. Doughty, I think, in his learned but Meredithianly and Carlyleanly abstruse work, gives the best sum total of their character." Against the missionary Mark lifted his protest. As for the missionized, "the outward symptoms in the East are usually American springside boots and ugly European clothes. The final stage is that in which the victim, hating his teacher and ashamed of his parentage and nationality, is intensely miserable." He felt it was a mistake for the French Jesuits to teach an Ottoman "to play at being a Frenchman" or for Americans "to graft on some tree they have blasted some exotic spriggery of their own." He excepted the French Dominicans, who trained the Chaldean priesthood in their own rites and literature, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's mission to the Nestorians on similar lines. But on the whole "the religion born of the Reformation and reared in lands of machinery and science becomes a grotesque cant when thrust upon a Christian of Asiatic Turkey. He scorns his old creed because it is old. He follows that of the missionary because he admires the well-made boots and furniture of the latter. The formulas of Presbyterianism do not take long to acquire. The whole gamut of undogmatic Christianity is learned by the Oriental in a week or so. The convert deludes his American pastor. The American missions demolish and destroy what is most precious." At Homs he was glad to find that the Jesuits, who train the Uniates, "give no encouragement to that brawling spirit of vendetta so dear to the heart of the native Christian." The Uniates, "while following most of their Oriental ritual, abandon the fundamental points of controversy." They congratulated the Greeks on their feasts and even called on the Moslems in Bairam. Imagine Orangemen and Hibernians complimenting each other on St. Patrick's Day and the Twelfth of July! In the Fellaheen of Syria he described something akin to the Irish peasantry before the Famine: "Good, gentle people, cultivating the land excessively ill, squeezed most cruelly for taxes. Owing to their ignorance of sanitation, they fall heavily before cholera. Naturally a peace-loving people, they have been forced by circumstances into a state of semi-war which has rendered them hardy, tough, frugal. Though moral, they are coarse in their similes, loving wonderful fairy-tales of poor men who become incredibly rich by the aid of talismans." He took down stories showing the family likeness between Irish fairies and Eastern jinns. "Every Syrian has something of a poet, a philosopher and a rhetorician in his composition," he wrote in his "Five Mansions of the House of Othman." He wished them immunity from "a designing Imperial boss who might reduce them to serfdom for the purpose of filling his pockets and gaining the name of Empire maker." He contrasted the deserts of South Africa, " where man is an uninteresting cipher, but in Syria every stone has an interest, every hill has been trodden into paths. Man has left his marks on every rock, and every stage of early society is to be seen: the cave-dweller, the nomad, the semi-nomad, the villager, the townsman."

Amongst the inscriptions he found was one on the tomb of a pessimistic poet (Abu'l-Ala al-Ma'arri): " Here lies the crime of my father uncommitted by me"! He began to make unusual comparisons between the Turks and Armenians. In the Armenian church " the books are tattered and torn, the altar is foul and filthy, the pictures are vile daubs; the congregation is numerous, but of prayers or outward piety you see or hear little. They go to hear their language, to hear their native songs, to see that which is in their opinion the last sign of what they imagine was their great all-conquering Empire." (" The Five Mansions.") He found there was something to be said for the Turks " in spite of the fact that Murray's guide says that they are hated by every race and creed." Turkish rule had freed Syria from Bedouin attack. " The average Turk is as honourable as the average Englishman when he receives his pay, and as dishonest when he does not." As for the massacres, " while no excuse can be made for the conduct of the Turks in slaughtering Armenians, it should be remembered that massacre is still a recognized method of policy throughout the East and until lately in the West. Why, indeed, should one say lately when the behaviour of the allied troops at Pekin is a matter of to-day?" At Malatia he learnt the usual tale of Armenians preparing a revolution and being massacred themselves. They even fired on the Franciscans escaping from their convent "in hopes of killing a European and so forcing the hand of the Powers." They seemed without hope. "The Armenian revolutionaries prefer to plunder their co-religionists. The revolutionary societies are leagued one against the other; the priests connive at the murder of a bishop; the national church is divided at its foundations." ("The Five Mansions.")

He made sketches to replace the useless maps. Essengeli, imagined with a query, he realized. At Shaykli he found twenty Trappists ("French dervishes"), who supplied him with the local topography. Near Derendeh he visited the Hittite lions, which he described as "fine examples of early impressionist work. These lions have every advantage of the Rodin school: they are repulsively ugly, hopelessly misshapen, their mouths are growing in the middle of their chests, and, further, they bear no more resemblance to lions than the bandy-legged, sinewy, simian, green gentleman at South Kensington does to St. John the Baptist."

The fortitude of the Turkish soldier won his respect and almost his reverence. "The Turk has something in his nature which may astound the world yet." He described the old school of Turkish official: "Ignorant, uneducated, corrupt as one of Queen Anne's statesmen, half Falstaff, half old woman;

courteous, nervous, conceited, ready to sell his soul for a little money, fond of children, dull and obstinate as a mule yet rather lovable withal."

Another type whom he described in his first book is worth recalling, the Gendarme, or *Zaptieh*. "He rides, jobs, carries the post, fights, and occasionally makes an arrest. He is one of the chief features of the Turkish Empire; but to the greater number of untravelled Englishmen he is unknown. If he is seen he is taken for a soldier, which he is certainly not. A Quaker would not be more shocked than he would if you asked him if he were one. And yet what is he? If you talk of fighting his eyes blaze. He tells you how he alone would fight twenty Bedouins, and so I believe he would."

At Zakho he saw a British Lee-Metford in a shepherd's hands, and was carried into reverie. "What a history it could tell! Probably stolen near Peshawar, sneaked to Cabul, drifted to Suleimanieh, sold, stolen, smuggled and hugged over three thousand miles of the most wonderful country in the world."

He found himself "dodging war parties all day long and making up maps all night." He was mistaken for an English pasha, a spy, or the King of England's daughter in disguise! He realized that the Oriental was unfathomable to one like himself. "If a ring-tailed baboon talking English, riding on a white elephant, accompanied by two policemen, were to enter a Yorkshire village and quarter himself in one of the houses, what impression would he get of the people? Just about as correct a one as an Englishman in any village between Adana and Baghdad."

At Mosul he found Arabs "with the minds of mudlarks and the appearance of philosophers." It was to be a town which played some part in his career, but it struck him unfavourably: "The wheezy plaints of lepers and hideously maimed beggars, bazaars that are reeking and dark at midday, strings of supercilious, bubbling, split-lipped camels. These are the things of Mosul, and of all lands where Arabs are a majority." Perhaps Mark felt there was a reason for his giving it to the French by treaty a decade later. At Gigarra he struck petroleum: "Stinking smoke coiling up from retorts, the workmen foul beyond all filthiness, and in the distance the black lake, the yellow hills, and a mass of broken boilers and worn-out petroleum tins in the foreground. Jacob tactfully remarked, '*Maintenant nous sommes en Angleterre.*' And so true was the remark that I could have knocked him down."

The passage of the Tigris was not without humorous peril. "The boat is a replica of that extraordinary ark which creaks across the stages of English provincial theatres when the heroine has to be rescued. On land this vessel would be excellent used as a hen-roost, or with creepers it would form a romantic summer-house; but as a ferry boat it is by no means an unqualified success." He could not help imagining the account of his drowning which would be tapped out on the tape at his London club, adding piously, "I hope Father Gavin will remember me on Sunday at Farm Street."

It was beyond "peaceful Anatolia, noisy Syria, dismal Armenia" that he found "the purple East with a vengeance." Assyria gave him thought: "Space, distance, infinite and immeasurable, is the keynote of Assyrian landscape. A low, blue mountain range, perhaps forty miles away, a minaret at four leagues distance, a patch of brown village twenty furlongs off, and between those objects a rolling stretch of almost imperceptible undulations, intersected here and there by a winding path of little ridges, the tracks and trails of centuries of caravans and wayfarers. Over these plains the Empires of Babylon and Assyria ruled in pride of blood and wealth. These plains were rutted by their chariots, these rivers chequered with their merchant craft, these deserts traversed by their armies toiling on to conquest and defeat. Huge enduring mounds now mark their vast palaces and towers of strength. Faintly we hear the clangour of their struggle for the highest place; dully the sullen rumble of their fall."

Finally, in Constantinople, he saw the Caliph, "an elderly Turkish gentleman, a little round-shouldered, with keen, intelligent eyes, a hooked nose, and a full, dark grey beard." He was thrilled at the sight of a "man whose hand is felt in every province of the Ottoman Empire; for whose sake four hundred thousand men are ready to leave their homes and die, the man concerning whom quite uncomplimentary motions have been passed by British vestrymen in council!"

As for the old Byzantine capital, "cooks from Konia, boatmen from the Pontine shores, charcoal burners from the forest of Sivas, cobblers from Kastamuni, porters from Kurdistan, money changers from Armenia and Jewry, horse dealers from Arabia form parts of the changing and ever changing crowds . . . the crowds may change, the map of Europe may be modified this way and that, languages may flux and vanish, the Empire may fall away and yet gather around her once more, but Constantinople remains unmoved, unconquerable and indestructible —the all-corrupting yet seemingly incorruptible."

The Oriental veneer underlay even the German drilling, and he noticed a smartly laced officer passing a poor porter's funeral. "But still, when this man saw the funeral he hooked up his sword, threw away his cigarette, and, stepping out into the street, put his shoulder under the coffin and strode along, sharing the burden with the three ragged porters." This incident closes "Dar-ul-Islam."

From Aleppo he sent Dr. James (January 18, 1903) a long and authentic piece of Christian folklore, how the Superior of the Franciscans in Jerusalem sent a messenger to the Superior in Nazareth. The messenger sped by the Damascus Gate, but chancing to play a magic flute, was whisked by jinns to Nazareth in three minutes and back before the ink of the answer was dry. "Now I call that a very interesting story coming from the East. It ought to be of importance to Folklore people—could you let one of them know? It seems to me so like the Irish, Scotch and Tannhauser style of legend."

Some letters to Henry Cholmondeley survived from this trip:

CONSTANTINOPLE.

I arrived here on Saturday morning, and proceeded to the Custom House, where I was detained some two hours. At length I proved in different ways, viz., by 20 francs, that I was neither an Armenian travelling on a forged passport or an English conspirator or an Importer of Dynamite, and at last reached the hotel. I have seen several important officials and have procured the different letters of introduction, and so far my journey has been smooth excepting yesterday, when I went on board the Russian steamer on which I start this afternoon. Its cargo consists of some 800 stinking Russian pilgrims. When I went into the hovel which does duty for a saloon, I found the Russian skipper blind drunk with two lady friends from the shore, which hardly looks like a pleasant voyage as I am the only other passenger.

HOMS.

I have a cook and no kitchen, mules and no tents and no saddles. I have to travel simply to keep the mules in exercise. But the waiting reminds me of nothing so much as South Africa.

ALEPPO,
January 22, 1903.

You would have been interested by my ride from Homs to Aleppo. Four years ago there was not a blade of grass, now the whole country is under the plough. A furrow six miles long is rather a sight to see. If ever the Government here wakes up, there will be no necessity to grow barley in England, as the whole strip of land from Homs to Aleppo, about 80 miles broad by 100, will produce abundant crops under *wooden* ploughs, which require a bullock and a donkey to drag. This tells what the land is like.

DIARBEKER.

I have had a fearful time in the snows, temperature 12 degrees below zero. Two English girls passed through here about four months ago, which seems odd. Their luggage consisted of one tent, one revolver and a saucepan. I roared with laughter at the idea of the vote of thanks for Lord Middleton. Well, I wish them joy. I wish I could go into Parliament. I would if I knew what I was, but I will content myself with writing for a time, and then if people think me a Conservative from my writing, I'll be one, or *vice versa.*

Meantime Mark's new book was written. When "Dar-ul-Islam" appeared, Arnold White wrote in the *Sunday Sun:* "Since Mary Kingsley no writer of travel has blended a strong personality with so much of the appetizing salt of humour. The true state of the Turkish Empire is revealed in this book of infinite jest. Freedom from prejudice, however, and knowledge of the world do not change our Yorkshire captain into a cosmopolitan Englishman." The *Spectator* wrote: "Books of travel are of three kinds. There are the learned books and the ignorant books and the books written by Captain Mark Sykes. These last it is impossible to describe except in French; they are *étourdissants.* But they are also the East, the surface of the East." The *Athenæum* regretted that in a footnote "he goes on casually to describe what will be taken by many to have been a murder of a Russian consul as a mere instance of a European receiving his reward." *Vanity Fair* compared his footnotes to Gibbon's as the "unobtrusive resting-places of some of his most delightful remarks."

Rudyard Kipling wrote (May 6, 1904): “ Having formally to acknowledge ‘ Dar-ul-Islam,’ I sat down to read it and stayed there for the rest of the evening. Thank you very much indeed for it. I don’t know Turkey, but I can see the chit and the delay and the confusion at the wayside *serais* as I can smell the smell (much like ours in India, I take it) of the towns. What you said about the cold in ‘ warm ’ countries went to my bones. Nothing is colder than the East when she chooses. I am very glad you like the Turk. I’ve met a few uncontaminated ones, and they were at least as good as many Christian gentlemen that one knows. Altogether I found it a delightful book, for which I thank you once again. You ought to have been born in the East.”

H. G. Wells wrote (May 7, 1904): “ I’ve just been looking through ‘ Dar-ul-Islam,’ and I perceive it’s going to be a great lark to read and that I’m going to learn things. I like your ‘ down ’ on civilization and suchlike.”

On one point Mark was sensitive: as to whether he had covered new ground or not. When the *Express* denied it he wrote:

> The route between Qalʿa Sharqāt and Altun Kopri has never been traversed before to my knowledge. Layard, it is true, went somewhere near it. The district between ʿAmādiya, ʿAgra, Zibar and Ruwāndiz is very little known. I naturally did not make sketch maps of country already carefully explored. I am almost certain that no one has passed over the road from Qasr-es-Slib to Basin Vira and Kondik.

Returning to England, Mark rushed down to

Cambridge and scribbled in Professor Browne's rooms:

October 17, 1903.

I am very sorry to have missed you. But ALLAH has willed otherwise. I am going (*Inshallah*) to be married on the 28th to Edith Gorst, who gave you the introduction to the Egyptian Government. Could you give me the name of a good man to revise the names in my book? Also, could Smith and I beg of you on bended knees for a little foreword? Did you get the MS. I sent you from Haleb?

October 26, 1903.

And upon you be the blessing and the peace. It was very kind of you, and pray give my highest compliment to your *Shaykh* who did the couplets *make*, for Mark and Edith's sake, and so closed a bond of friendship which shall never *break*, and though but one writes, from two the recognition *take*. We are off to Constantinople on Wednesday.

On his return to England Mark was delighted to meet the receiver of his amusing and devoted correspondence. They had been separated for two years and a half, and marriage was a fitting guerdon for the fidelity with which they had awaited each other. There was no religious question. Miss Gorst had been received by Mgr. Scott into the Catholic Church weeks before she first met Mark at Cambridge, and they were married in St. Wilfred's, York, by Dr. Lacey, Catholic Bishop of Middlesbrough.

The marriage was a rapturous success. Mark's interests filled his bride's life with adventure and duty. Though his mother had always hoped rather frankly that he would follow romance when he met it, and that an elopement would one day stabilize his seriousness, Mark had his own views, and could have claimed Coventry Patmore's lines, if he ever read them :

> Who is the happy husband ? He
> Who scanning his unwedded life
> Thanks Heaven with a conscience free
> 'Twas faithful to his future wife.

Mark was no prude or prig, but he found he had only sufficient spare time for thought of one woman, and that woman one who passed absolutely into his plans, trials, successes and joys. Neither was luckier than the other. It proved one of those few marriages which are made in Heaven. The faithful Henry Cholmondeley was best man, and the *Yorkshire Herald* announced "the honeymoon will be spent in Jerusalem!" Mark brought his bride to Sledmere before they set out for an expedition into Asia Minor. Local rumour was delighted and proclaimed a long stay, so that Sir Tatton, who did not wholly approve of brides, felt constrained to send his solicitor to Mrs. Mark Sykes to remind her politely of her promised departure. Sir Tatton himself was leaving for New Zealand at the first opportunity.

It is perhaps not inappropriate to include Mark's short stay in Ireland among his Oriental adventures. Ireland is an Eastern island which, under enchantment, has gone West. The feuds, the fancies, the fatalism, the feudalism, the fun and fury to which Mark had been accustomed in the East met him in modified Celtic forms, while the British Government, entering into the transmogrifying process, showed occasional resemblances to that of the Turk, though not always to his disadvantage. The position of Ireland can never be regarded except as a form of Divine practical joke on England, a joke that neither party has yet been brought to see. At any rate, like a holy thorn from the Sacred Reliquary, Ireland lies pricking the Anglo-Saxon instep.

George Wyndham was the charmingly regnant Irish Secretary. There had arisen among the novelties of the administration a tendency to employ Catholics or Home Rulers under the Tory régime. Mark was appointed his secretary on December 18, 1903, and the *Yorkshire Gazette* sniffed Government anxiety "to have Roman Catholic ambassadors in their negotiations with the Irish hierarchy."

Mark had no real interest in English or Irish politics. The East was his hobby and lodestar, and there he rightly felt his fate lay, but his wife had continually insisted in their protracted correspondence while he was in South Africa that he must enter Parliament, a lot against which he never ceased to protest, and it was partly to meet her wishes that he took up his new position at the Lodge, Phœnix Park, whence he wrote to her:

> I have been here twenty-four hours and know a little less than when I arrived! I am expected as far as I can see to know already a vast amount *re* "Rates," etc. If that oaf had told me what books to get instead of vapouring, I should be of more use. But as it is I have to pick up what they have been doing for four years with the end of a stick out of a dust-bin. I was given a huge report of eighty-four pages to make a *Précis* for the "chief" (!) However, as the

Précis was already printed at the end of the report, which no one had read, I was saved some little trouble. Of course, the "chief" is not here or likely to be for some days—at least next Monday, so I might as well have stayed with you at Sledmere. Politics fill me with disgust, but I will go through with this infernal job as long as you can stand it. As soon as you are bored, be ill and we will flee to a cleaner land. I don't know if I can possibly hold out in the office work, though I want air and real work. Give me a native regiment to organize, a rebellion to raise, a map to make, a blockhouse line to construct, a Vilayet to govern, and I will do it; give me an independent command, anything you choose but this—this life of a cat—in this . . .

I went to the Zoo here. The keeper at the monkey-house is so like a monkey that one cannot help turning aside to smile. There was the great History man here last night, and he was such a difference to the other people, who are, of course, of the Poetic School, but this man's word was law which none might contradict, and he opened the conversation with a rasping voice, saying, "*I tell you Macaulay was a mighty genius.*" There was a muttering of "O-er-yes, of course," but then he said, "*A mighty genius I say,*" and the Poetic School changed the subject!

I went with Gatty to the Zoo. Poor Gatty was quite out of Drawing after seeing the wild beasts fed. He said he felt he wished he had never been born into such a cruel world.

Mark also ventured into Irish military circles, judging by a letter to Henry Cholmondeley concerning the Connaught Rangers in camp: "The regiment is the most extraordinary affair. The men have never been drilled, and when the other day I said to a man, 'Put on your gaiters,' he replied, 'Faith, I will not, or anyone else's either!'"

Mark's Irish career was short. He soon found that his religion caused uncertainty among the party he was associated with. The *Dublin Daily Express* seemed in doubt, even, of his sex, once referring to "Lady Sykes's (Mary Sykes's mother) weekly journal, the *Review of the Week!*" The only documentary memorial of his office work is an extremely amusing sketch of an Irish Labourers' Bill, in which Archbishop Walsh, Lord Atkinson and Lord MacDonnell were included. But he acquired a vivid interest in Ireland and a deep love for his chief. When George Wyndham came to his early death, ten years later, Mark wrote thus in the *Saturday Review:*

June 14, 1913.

> His personal beauty, his brave bearing, his immense physical and moral courage, his uncontrollable exuberance of spirits made him what an Eastern would have called a manifestation rather than an ordinary man. His memory is to me a series of pictures which I need but think of to have in my mind something so good to see that had I never beheld a Velasquez I should yet have known the finest of natural presentments. His natural grace was such that he made the very drudgery of research a thing worth watching. Yet, again, have I seen him in a dim, gaslit, squalid hall in the north country facing an audience, dour, unpoetic, plain, blunt, critical and hostile . . . he had spoken of things which Tories dreaded to mention, which Moderates detested, and which Radicals loathed, yet they roared applause for the man who had spoken. . . . And now here is the gap. He has gone suddenly and without warning. The great mind has ceased to fret, the great heart to beat. We shall never again see his brave figure in the hunting field, never again see him wrestling with his thoughts and theories, never again see him moving audiences with great phrases and noble sentiments. His monument lies in the increasing prosperity of the Irish peasantry, whom he loved, and in the future work of those about, whom he inspired.

Re-writing these words, one feels how many were to be applicable to Mark himself six years later. Those whom the gods love or who love Ireland must die young.

In April, 1904, Mark was journeying in the Balkans to visit the scene of the earthquakes at Jumabala, which led him to write an appeal to *The Times*. In the following year he became attached to Sir Nicholas O'Conor, Ambassador at Constantinople. For his second chief he felt an immediate fascination, and years later wrote in the *Dublin Review:*

September, 1913.

Sir Nicholas always seemed to me somehow to have stepped out of the pages of one of Thackeray's eighteenth century novels or the memoirs of Horace Walpole. His tall, frail figure, his languid almost weary movements, his charm of manners, his soft and gentle voice, all served as a singular setting for his eyes, which once seen were never to be forgotten. They were of a deep, intense blue and seemed indeed to have an almost hypnotic quality; penetrating yet kindly, they compelled truths yet disarmed fear or suspicion. At times they showed the strange sympathy with pathos and suffering which in an Englishman would be sentimentality, but in Irishmen comes of understanding. The fact is that through the whole of the period of his office at Constantinople there was never a day when British policy was in doubt nor yet ever one when its representative was disliked. Five years have gone by since he passed away. The scenes of his labours in the Balkan Peninsula, in the Far East and in Turkey have changed beyond recognition. China a republic, Turkey stripped of palace and Sultan, Bulgaria in six short months passed from the zenith to the nadir of Fortune. Yet one thing has not changed, and that is that in all those places there are men who cherish with affection and good-will the memory of the devout heroic Irish gentleman who sleeps among the cypress trees of Haidar Pasha.

While travelling in the interior Mark received a summons to Constantinople on account of his father's illness. The local official tried in vain to cheer him by saying that it was his father-in-law who was ill. He arrived weary at the British Chancery, and cast eyes for the first time on his future friend, Aubrey Herbert, whose quick impression of Mark was that of some English Aristides. "He drew, he wrote, he improvised; he did everything with a quality and on a scale that threw other men into the shade." The two became close friends, and Aubrey Herbert was one of those Mark caricatured most successfully and lovingly, for "Mark mimicked without making enemies." One of his lost vocations must have lain in the office of *Punch*. "Mark Sykes had vitality beyond any man I have ever met and a sympathy and an intuition that do not often go with exuberant energy. When one had been in his company one felt almost as if one had been given a draught from the fountain of life. He produced the effect on an individual that a great speaker produces on his audience," wrote Aubrey. "When Mark Sykes was bored he was genuinely bored; his face was impassive like geology. When he was thinking, his face was dulled and his eyes almost vacant; but when he had captured that which his thoughts were chasing, he laughed, with a wisp of hair astray on his forehead, till even his enemies laughed with him. There was an infection in his laughter when his face wore a look of illumination that none could resist."

As an instance of the sense of realism which he could convey by conversation: he was once discussing massacres with Aubrey Herbert in an Eastern carpet shop when a cry of "*Vour! vour!*" (Strike! strike!) was raised. "The outer door of the bazaar was slammed and the Syrian merchant got hurriedly under the table. Mark Sykes and I looked at each other uneasily, fearing the worst. 'I think, sar, they keel one raat!' mentioned a Greek interpreter."

From Constantinople Mark wrote to Mr. Cholmondeley:

> *August* 20, 1905.
>
> As regards my father, New Zealand with a private cook seems to me a possible solution, or again South Africa, but the private cook is, of course, essential. I am now very satisfied with my work, which is much more real than the Irish Office. I don't quite see how I am to return to England in September, or until the end of next year, unless it is absolutely necessary, as I am sketching in my mind's eye the construction of a really big work on the Ottoman Empire, of which so far I have not written a single line.

Four days later his heir, Richard, was born at Therapia.

The book Mark was contemplating was "The Caliph's Last Heritage," of which the second part described his travels in the Jazirah "over those portions of the map which were whitest or most rich in notes of interrogation and dotted lines." He passed into the desert and the desert night, which "differs from night in town and country inasmuch as, instead of being a signal for harlots and thieves, it is a time of truce and peace between man and man." And by day he "wondered how it was that the West had weaved such a wonderfully complex web of questions, troubles and misery out of the same materials from which my master builder was earning his just and peaceful livelihood."

Once more he visited Mosul, that sorcerous sink of horror where lingered "that dead Paganism which the Cross and Mohammed have slain but have as yet been unable to annihilate." Certainly, Zola never equalled his description of the *abattoir* at Mosul. In his choice of associates he was sometimes like George Borrow. He set out "with the sergeant of our escort, a brisk young murderer who has reformed on promotion," and visited Ibrahim Pasha, with his staff of ex-criminals only varied by a devil worshipper converted to Islam. Ibrahim conversed with him on the Irish question, the Algeciras Conference, and a delicate matter of rivalry between Sarah Bernhardt's travelling tent and his own. Ibrahim, he thought, was "a type of man who passed away in England with Warwick," but suggestive in his faults and qualities of Mithridates. Ibrahim, like Saladin, he pointed out, was the result of intermarriage between Kurd and Bedawi, two races whom he compared brilliantly.

"The Bedawi is, indeed, the strangest of all mankind. His material civilization is about on a par with that of a bushman, yet his brain is as elaborately and subtly developed as that of any Englishman with a liberal education. There is no reasonable argument he cannot follow, no situation which he cannot immediately grasp, no man whom he cannot comprehend; yet there is no manual act he can perform.

How different from the Kurd, whose hands are ever ready and busy, but whose mind has many closed doors and blocked-up passages! A Kurd is the simplest and most gullible of mortals. His fear of a man who can read the Koran is piteous; his wickedness, the wickedness of a wild animal; his uninquisitiveness great; his industry immense. Bedawi, on the other hand, is greatly inquiring, ever interested, yet his inquiries and interest, though intense, are completely abstract."

Another description is of Shaykh Sadik, "a ridiculous figure in a purple fur coat with a night-cap and tassel round which was wound a turban. The blue eyes of a wondering old child, gentle and smiling, the nose of a vulture, and a hideous cavernous slit of a mouth that shut as cruelly as a rat trap and opened in a sloppy sensual grin. Frame such a face as this in a purple beard, bar sinister it with a thin, straggling moustache, and you have Shaykh Sadik."

Turkification, leading to veiling of women and abandoning of tents, and Europeanization, leading to worse, filled him with anger. "Into this land of poetry and ignorance the ideas of the lowest of Anglo-Saxon savages are held up to adoration, hideous clothes, respectability and over-eating. Practical hard materialism is the last thing wanted in this land which only a poet or a saint could reform."

His recipe for successful Eastern travel is worth giving: "Wipe Omar Khayyam, Bernard Shaw and the Rev. R. J. Campbell out of your mind, learn the Book of Job by heart for philosophy, the Book of Judges for politics, the Arabian Nights (Burton's translation) for ethics; ride by balance, not by grip, keep your girths loose, look out for rat-holes, be polite and dignified in your conversation." *Voilà tout*—the Law and the Prophets.

He picked up a number of points lost necessarily on casual travellers. He pointed out that a citizen of Barcelona is more similar to a burgher of Glasgow than an Arab of Jerusalem is to an Arab of Kerbela. "An Arab of Beirut cannot comprehend an Arab of Mosul, a Greek of Smyrna understands nothing of a Greek of Pontus." He came across a Jewish colony, isolated probably since the Captivity, who would only accept sugar on a Sabbath by picking it off the ground as a gift of God. He found Nestorian Christians tending their sheep much as on the first Christmas night, but with the slight addition of Martini rifles! At Solali he found an unknown but perfect Roman bridge. In the beauty of the Anatolian forest he felt the force of Pantheism in "that genial air, heavy with the scent of pine and the mournful aroma of the dead leaves of a hundred autumns, yet as refreshing as cold clear water to one parched in the desert," and thrilled towards evening "to mark the weltering sunset and then wait for the moon to appear, dimly effulgent, through a dense yet gleaming curtain of wholesome and unfevered mists, making the mountain, already mighty in daylight, appear like the huge ranges of some greater planet."

As for the unloveliness of Erzerum, he found "nothing so cheerful as the graveyards. In grim mockery it is surrounded by fortifications; but what madman would ever attack it? Did not the crazed Timur pass by, appalled at the ugliness of the place?" Kastamuni he found the most beautiful place in Anatolia. "Leaden domes and graceful minarets rise amid dark green gardens, while houses are as beautiful as the manors of the time of Henry VII." At Sinope he commended a jail where five policemen and some old men with sticks were sufficient to guard 950 cut-throats, who did their own catering in the town. At Sinope he was joined by his wife, who continued with him on a long journey into Kurdistan as far as the Persian frontier. He had already written her a number of letters, passages from which follow:

ALEXANDRETTA.
March 20, 1906.

A funny story while on board the ship. A Greek theatrical company came on board and joined the deck passengers, a Vali of high rank came to join the first-class passengers, midnight at Limassol was made hideous, a cry of rape was raised—screams, kicks, groans and cries were heard in all directions. Out of the confusion it was discovered that a reverend Khoja and the Vali's coachman had made improper advances to the leading lady of the company, which were indignantly repelled. The Khoja said the accusation was libellous, a Greek actor knocked off his turban, an Albanian soldier punched the Greek's head most terribly, a sailor came to the rescue, knives were drawn, chaos reigned supreme, and an Italian ship's officer, who had lost his head completely, accused the inoffending Vali of having provoked the trouble. Result: the ship's officer wanted to land the whole lot by force, the Vali wanted to report the matter to the Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, the Greek wanted to inform his Consulate, the Albanian soldier wanted to kill all Christians, and so until one o'clock in the morning, when everyone went to bed muttering death and vengeance on everybody else.

HALEB.
March 25, 1906.

I hope the sacrifices we are both making will be repaid by the work done, but it is hard to do it all the same. I have got forty-eight brand new tribes—but, my very dearest, it is difficult plodding along alone; no babies and no Edith make this town emptier than the desert, for God is in the desert. I went to Mass, High Mass, yesterday, and the Franciscans sang as usual, and as it was the Annunciation they conformed to the letter of the new law by having their brass band in the courtyard. *It* played the Blue Danube at the Elevation! Tarumtarura—Tarumtarara—Tareedee-Rustchuk against the Russians.

March 29, 1906.

We went to a dinner party last night with a Bey 'oo 'ad married an English gurl—and had been exiled for so doing. After dinner his uncle, who had shared his misfortune, came in. He was known as Abid Pasha. He came into the room, kissed his nephew, then his niece, and then me; he then took off his Tarboosh and danced a cake-walk with the rest of the company. Abid Pasha was the general who held Rustchuk against the Russians.

DOMINICAN HOUSE, MOSUL.
April 28, 1906.

My journey hither has not been altogether devoid of adventure, particularly in Jebel Singar, where I tumbled into a rebellion and just got through by the skin of my teeth, but I have been very good, you see, and have run away here. It was quite an accident, but very unpleasant for twenty-four hours. The people are devil-worshippers, and said they were going to kill every single Turk within a hundred miles. I said I was a Christian; replied they "*Christian—mistian HE'SI bir,*" but they only robbed us of a Medjidie. While they were quarrelling over it we escaped. I am staying here with my old friends the Dominicans, nice Frenchmen, most ex-officers, Royalists and quite unpractical; the more I see of these really lovable men the more hopeless matters seem to me for France. Compromise is a matter out of the question to them. Why will they be so damned logical? Frenchmen have no political "nose" at all, Great Scott! Gladstone or Dizzy or even C.B. or A.B. would have roped in half the Socialists within a week of the fall of the last Ministry, but here they seemed outraged at the idea.

SAMSOON.
June 15, 1906.

Where you must meet me; we will then go to Kastamuni together and begin the journey. I can't tell you how lonely I am, and how discouraged with my work I sometimes feel. My present writings appear to me bad and heavy, but I suppose you will say they are splendid, but you will be wrong I fear. I wonder what Monty thinks of the scraps of history? I blush for some of them now. The climate here is awful. One feels like a lump of dough. The only cool moment is at about 4 A.M., and then one is asleep. I got to Confession and Communion to-day. There are two delightful Italian officers buying Arab mares (quite good ones), but they experience great difficulties and do not understand Valis in the least. The Vali here has done them nicely in the eye. He let them go out to buy in the desert and then haled them back under the pretext of danger in order to sell them three rubbishy horses he bought for himself.

RAGGA.
May 5, 1906.

Barkham sent an old saddle after me which is rather like a fourpost bedstead that has been thrown on a dunghill. The whole place is bubbling over with local wars, but no one has been killed or likely to be. An old man told me the other day that, since Martinis came into fashion, the fighting was much safer, as people always kept at a great distance. I met an old Shaykh yesterday who told me a funny story. I asked him if villages were increasing in value here; by way of answer he spoke as follows: "Years ago, soon after Harun Al Rashid, there was a certain king, and in this desert there dwelt two owls, and the younger of the two owls grew amorous of the daughter of the other, so he paid him a visit and said to him, O owl of the owls, I would marry your daughter.' Replied the old owl, 'These things must not be done hurriedly. Have you a village with deserted houses where you may keep my daughter in a state befitting her lineage?' And the young owl raised his claw in a salaam and smiled, saying, 'Upon my head be it; at present I have only eighty deserted villages wherein I may entertain your daughter, but if God wills it so that our Lord follow his present policy for another twenty years, then indeed I shall have all the villages between here and Baghdad!'" As he told me this story he glared at the soldiers, who only said "it is all true enough." Now I have maps to make, diaries to write, medicine to give to the sick, and the ruins of Ragga to photograph.

DIARBEKR.

There is a real treasure here in the way of a Consul, Shipley. Loud complaints from this fellow. Why don't they get Whiteley to send out a man who knows about trade things? Why get gentlemen like me if they want a commercial education? Tell your brother from me, tell him as I love England, that you want a new broom and a new tradition. This Levant system is rotten. It appeals to mediocrities and spiritless owls. Fitz-Maurice is almost the only man in the whole Service. The rest you know. A dog-whip is the only argument with such fellows as some of them. Why is it that some casual Levanter like Catoni or average soldier like Tyrrell is worth ten of some of these University men. When I see this country and think of our long lost opportunities it makes me mad. Yet remember Warren Hastings and Milner. I dare say we are destined to be masters of Turkey, and that is why we are carrying on like this. The ways of God are inscrutable. I cannot help thinking I see the finger of destiny in all this, and yet we are a declining nation. Are we falling into the hands of hidebound official cliques and settling everything by competitive exam ?

By a sad coincidence Mr. Shipley was doomed to perish, as Mark was doomed, of pneumonia in Paris at the end of the war. Their Kadesh was the same on their foreheads, could they have seen it. It was Shipley who, when sent by the Foreign Office to Philippopolis, said: "I have begun to learn Bulgarian. If a knowledge of the language of the country does not suffice to cause my removal from it, nothing will!"

CHAPTER V

RELIGION

MARK was, perhaps with the exception of Lord Hugh Cecil, the only Tory Member of Parliament with whom religion was really the ultimate interest in life. The chance of his slightly haphazard reception into the Holy Roman Church came to influence and mould his whole life. Endowed with the *anima naturaliter Catholica,* he would have become reconciled with the Holy See of his own accord. The religious lessons he received at Beaumont or Monte Carlo or Brussels never grew dim, and travelling had increased his appreciation of the only Church which follows the traveller throughout the world. He attended Mass whenever it was possible, and had a strange stock of bizarre rites in his experience. He attended a Coptic Mass in the Egyptian desert, which unexpectedly concluded with prayers for the felicity of King Edward and Sir Mark Sykes and their respective families, "the priest in a red cope and black turban, the server in white with a white turban." The Gospel consisted of "a long selection from Exodus being read aloud in Arabic . . . the Host was broken in pieces dipped in the chalice and given with a spoon; each time the server partook he walked once round the altar with a kerchief held to his lips; he partook three times in all.'' On another strange occasion he found the Nestorian Church in difficulties, as their Primate had just died, and most of his family—out of which his successor had to be elected—had become Catholic Chaldeans. In consequence they consecrated a boy bishop! Language, he found, was no test of religion. He found Jacobite Christians who were really Kurds, and the Mahalemi, who became Moslem two hundred years previously because the Patriarch would not give them a dispensation to eat meat in famine. At an Armenian Mass the *pain bénit* was brought to him once in a towel, and by him mistaken with some horror for the Blessed Sacrament.

The East exercised a profound influence on his religious mind without altering its dogmatic mould. Unlike converts, he was not more Papal than the Pope, and, unlike the old Catholic, he did not repay his fellow-countrymen for the ignominy of the past by an unnoticed contempt. Mark was susceptible to all Christianity, just as he was tolerant and in many ways admiring of Mohammedanism. Of the Prophet he wrote: "It is impossible to believe that the man was not in earnest, mad if you will, but a scheming, crafty, vainglorious impostor never!" Even his teaching on women had excuse. "That Mohammed should have accepted polygamy as an institution was an unparalleled disaster for the world, but even here it is difficult to Christian charity to blame him, for he was bound by custom, tradition and Judaism to accept polygamy as legal.'' He realized Moslem bed-rock. "The simplicity of the creed, the canting formality of the prayers, the low ideals, the force with which belief in Islam or nothing is driven home from early youth make it impossible for a Mohammedan to become anything but an agnostic or remain as he is." He felt the depth of all Eastern religion unknown to most of his friends. Writing to *The Times* for relief after the Balkan earthquake, he said (May 9, 1902): "Moslem and Christian alike had suffered, and Moslem and Christian alike recognized the hand of God in all this destruction. The commander at Jumabala said truly—War is terrible, but God strikes more terribly."

Of the contrast between the two great religions he observed: "It is not Mohammedan law which we should admire, but the observance by Moslems of their own free will of those social duties which Christians will not perform save at the end of a policeman's truncheon." ("The Caliph's Heritage.") He found that no Arab with any means begged, the result being that "the beggars never want, and they have their sheikh as every other guild has. It appears to me very near a realization of the Christian ideal which somehow even the Charity Organization Society cannot achieve." And again: "Here we Europeans must bow to the East, for after a century of revolution and fuming and chatting and legislating we are not as near true fraternity and equality as the Kurdish Agha."

If East were West, he once imagined, and West were East "the Jingoes might occasionally preach

Jehad (Holy War) when it suited, but otherwise things would be just as they are, while in the East things would stand at that everlasting full stop which they reached soon after the architectural failure at Babel."

Compared to genuine religion all civilization was to Mark "Man trying to lift himself without God." In one respect he adopted Mohammedan conduct, his personal indifference to and avoidance of strong drink, though he had no wish to impose it on others. When he was at Cambridge his father selected a secondary claret for Mark's friends. Furiously Mark went to town and ordered the best wines and spirits his father ever ordered for Sledmere. He offered some of the resultant brandy to a friend with the query, "Will it do?" It was probably the best brandy in Cambridge at the moment.

He was once invited at Kastamuni to attend a Dervish sing-song in a mosque which he found was a mechanical means to "intense contemplation of the unity and omnipotence of God. Curiously enough, it is that essentially that divides the Moslem from the Christian, whose ideas are not usually directed to the mercy and goodness of God." When Dr. Campbell started his absurdly called New Theology, Mark wrote (March 20, 1907) comparing his doctrine with that of the Dancing Dervishes:

> Having had the whole matter laid before me by an eminent Kadri Dervish, I do not misjudge Mr. Campbell when he speaks of sin as a "quest for God," but according to Oriental mystics this is just the kind of statement which

should never be made in public, for it is their belief that until a man has been through a long and tedious novitiate he has not the mental strength to appreciate the essential meaning of such an idea.

Now, personally, I am not an admirer of Pantheism, but if such a scheme of religion is to be brought forward in this country, with all its obvious dangers to the State arising from the possibility of a negation of evil by the intelligent and a worship of evil by the degraded, I do suggest in all seriousness that the leaders of the movement should study with care the methods of those Eastern Mystics who have had countless ages of practical experience in the ordering and direction of similar forms of belief.

And he wrote to Professor Browne:

March 26, 1907.

Isn't the dear conceited old Occidental a funny old thing with his intense "Newness." I wonder if he ever heard of Mazelak—you remember he came to rather a warm corner eventually. I thought of your Sufi friend, "Where is Abraham? Here! Where Isa? Here! Where Mohammed? Here! Where Allah? Here!" Verily Campbell will end by carving Abu el Ulla el Ma'ari's epitaph on his own tombstone, with "isn't this an original idea" written underneath it. I remember on this last journey hearing of a Sufi who said, "I am God," and made no other remark until eventually knocked on the head.

Mark was a personal friend of the Archbishop of York and of Mr. Davies, the Anglican vicar of Sledmere, and he could always turn religious differences into a humorous channel. Once when he was entertaining the Archbishop of York at Sledmere it rained heavily. "What can you expect," asked Mark, "if you invite the High Priests of Baal to luncheon?"

He once suggested to E. T. Sandars, a church pageant which is not too profane to print (June 6, 1909):

> I feel sure that the Church Pageant must delight you. Why should we not have a further pageant next year:
>
> *Tableau the First:* Cranmer weeping over the fall of Wolsey.
>
> *Tableau Second:* Clergy acclaiming Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth; the same clergy with greyer wigs as the years progress will accentuate the true "Catholicity" of thought expressed in these *tableaux.*
>
> *Tableau Third:* Oliver Cromwell swearing to uphold the Established Church.
>
> N.B.—This didn't happen, but should show our dear Nonconformist brethren how wise Cromwell might have been.
>
> *Tableau Fourth:* Swift reading the "Tale of a Tub" to Queen Anne.
>
> *Tableau Fifth:* Hoadley refusing promotion and preferment.
>
> *Tableau Sixth:* John Wesley having tea with the Archbishop of Canterbury.
>
> *Tableau Seventh:* Martyrdom of Mr. Kensit.
>
> *Tableau Eighth:* Midnight march and apotheosis of the Bishop of London.
>
> *Tableau Ninth (a pious hope):* Bishop of London taking the Archbishop of Westminster, General Booth, and Dr. Clifford to an Empire Day benefit afternoon performance at the Empire Theatre.

Mark was in the habit of attending Daily Mass. When he inherited Sledmere he housed the Blessed Sacrament under his roof, and a red light burned perpetually where so much revelry had been.

On his home visits he never failed to discuss religion with Mr. Davies, whom he sometimes surprised by his mystic views. "He would humiliate me," said Davies; "he would always see what I did not." "Do you ever read Revelation?" he inquired at the beginning of the war. Mr. Davies humorously replied that he only remembered the stories his mother used to tell about the bad time promised in them for Catholics. "What do you make of it?" continued Mark. "The plague of hailstones were the same weight as the bombs dropped by the Zeppelins. Things don't get into that old book for nothing." When Bulgaria and Turkey finally broke down, he received it as an answer to the prayers on which he had concentrated his soul from the moment they took up arms against the Allies. Before he went from Sledmere for the last time he drew forth a battered Prayer Book, while strumming at the piano, and remarked: "Have you noticed how long God is sometimes answering prayer? *That* is Bulgaria and Turkey," meaning that he had made their eventual defeat the sole intention of his prayers during all those months.

Father Dunstan, of Ampleforth Abbey, writes: "Mark had a delicate sensitiveness which was far removed from scrupulosity and which was the outcome of his realization of spiritual things. One Saturday night, when he had snatched a week-end at Sledmere after his visit to Kut, he asked me if I knew who had perpetrated the appalling English of the 'Thirty Days' Prayer.' He said laughingly that anyone who went through with it deserved to get his petition. Then, with a quick transition to seriousness, he said that the people in London could not understand how, when some of the mightiest in the land failed, he managed to get things done; but he held up the little thin edition of the 'Garden of the Soul' that he always carried in the breast pocket of his uniform and said, 'I am doing it again for the third time.'" His belief that it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead was manifested at his father's funeral. As we turned from the graveside he burst out in his typically vigorous manner expressing his opinion of the Anglican service we had just left. He spoke of his father's sympathy with the Catholic Church and felt sure that he was in heart a Catholic. With this thought evidently filling his mind, he had obtained the key of the church the previous night, and at a late hour, with his great friend, Captain Bagshawe, went in and lighted the candles around the coffin and recited the Office of the Dead, the prayers of the Requiem Mass and the Absolutions. His attitude to other religions was based on the sound principle that in every form of religious worship there is some truth. Mark held that in a world tending so strongly to irreligion he ought to work for the preservation of limited truth. Thus we find him opposing Welsh Disestablishment and championing the Zionist cause.

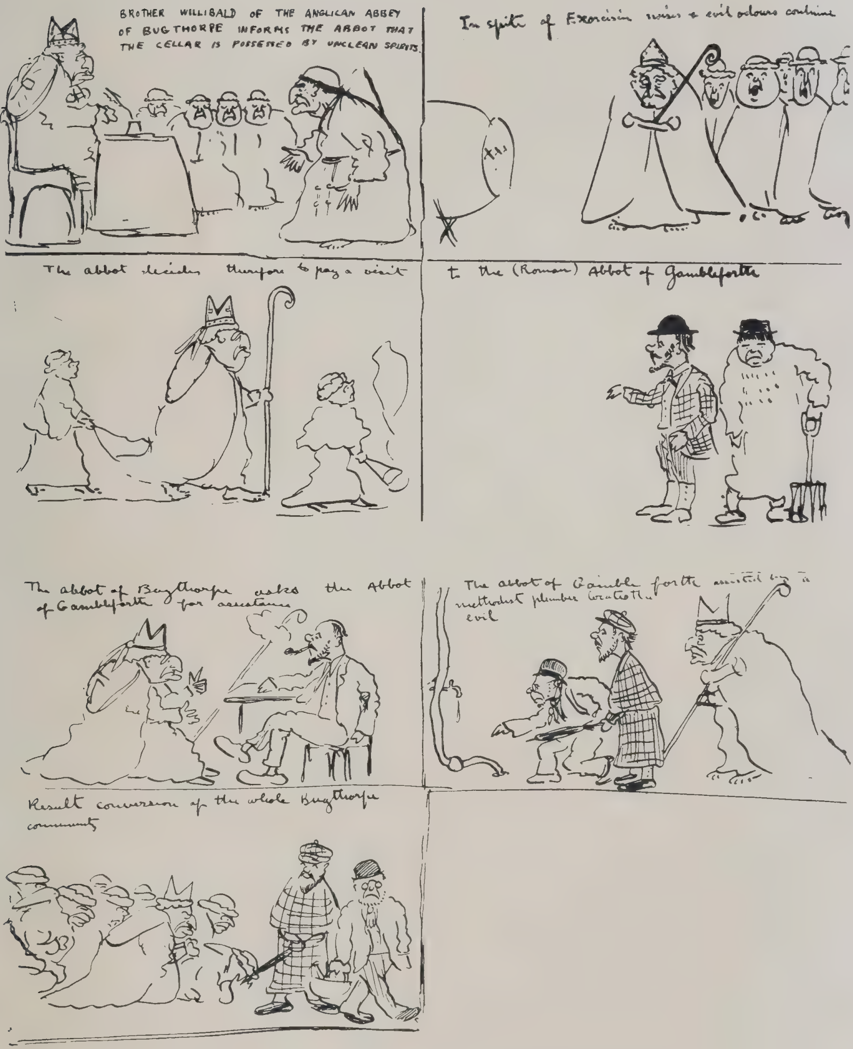
The East gave him a turn towards fatalism. He recalled an earthquake during which he had suggested galloping away, when a Turkish officer said to him: "My good friend, if God wants to kill us, He can do it quite as easily seven miles away as here." He also realized the Mohammedan attitude to the

Christian view, and laughed heartily over the censor at Smyrna who objected to the New Testament in Turkish because it contained some very inflammatory letters addressed to people near Ephesus!

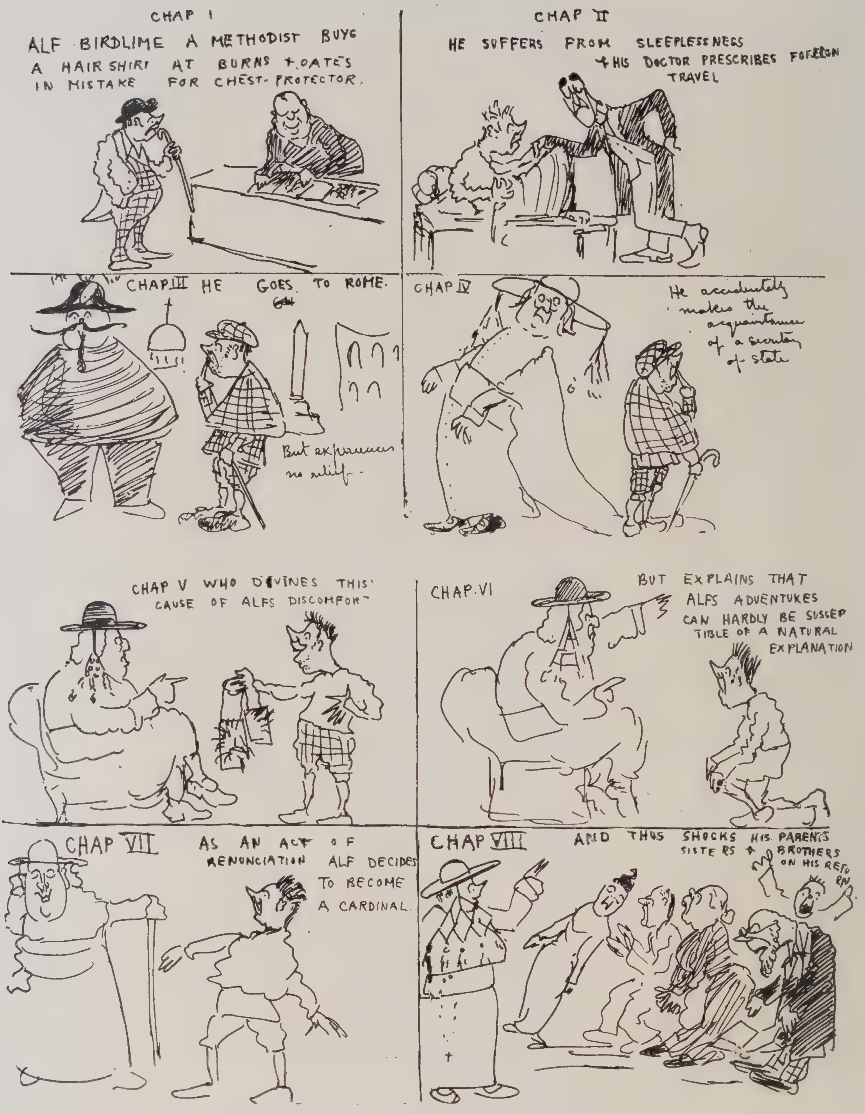
He was willing to contribute when there was a good cause, but the demands of some Anglican clergy stuck in his gorge. As he wrote to Mr. Cholmondeley: "Here is a bitter cry from darkest—— The phrase 'benefit to all who come after me' combined with a gentle request to add to an already large sum is enough to make one's blood seethe with rage. My bishop has only three furnished rooms and a bedroom. My parish priest's house at Driffield is only standing by a special intervention of Providence! My cardinal has to hire a man in buttons when company calls at his house. On the other hand, of course, I may have misjudged, so write or talk to Edith about it, but really when I think—— O damn!"

He never lost sight of the humorous or curious. When suggesting to the Catholic bishop that the priest should combine with parson and minister to bless the colours he mentioned: "I remember when I was in danger in the Taurus mountains my Catholic and Mohammedan servants vowed to sacrifice a lamb in the name of Abraham the prophet, and its flesh to be given to the poor—if they should complete their journey in safety."

The humours of religion entered intensely into Mark's composition. He illustrated the relations supposedly between a Roman and Anglican order of monks under the following scenes:


BROTHER WILLIBALD OF THE ANGLICAN ABBEY OF BUGTHORPE INFORMS THE ABBOT THAT THE CELLAR IS POSSESSED BY UNCLEAN SPIRITS.
In spite of Exorcism noises & evil odours continue
The abbot decides therefore to pay a visit
to the (Roman) Abbot of Gambleforth
The abbot of Bugthorpe asks the Abbot of Gambleforth for assistance
The abbot of Gamble forth assisted by a methodist plumber locates the evil
Result conversion of the whole Bugthorpe community

AN ANGLO-ROMAN TRAGEDY.


CHAP I
ALF BIRDLIME A METHODIST BUYS
A HAIR SHIRT AT BURNS + OATES
IN MISTAKE FOR CHEST-PROTECTOR.
CHAP II
HE SUFFERS FROM SLEEPLESSNESS
+ HIS DOCTOR PRESCRIBES FOREIGN
TRAVEL
CHAP III HE GOES TO ROME.
But experiences no relief -
CHAP IV
He accidentally makes the acquaintance of a secretary of state
CHAP V WHO DIVINES THIS CAUSE OF ALFS DISCOMFORT
CHAP. VI
BUT EXPLAINS THAT
ALFS ADVENTURES
CAN HARDLY BE SUSCEP
TIBLE OF A NATURAL
EXPLANATION
CHAP VII
AS AN ACT OF
RENUNCIATION ALF DECIDES
TO BECOME
A CARDINAL.
CHAP VIII
AND THUS SHOCKS HIS PARENTS
SISTERS + BROTHERS
ON HIS RETURN

SKETCHES FOR A SUGGESTED NOVEL BY
FATHER HUGH BENSON.

"Brother Willibald, of the Anglican Abbey of —— informs the abbot that the cellar is possessed of unclean spirits. In spite of exorcism noises and evil odours continue. The abbot decides, therefore, to pay a visit to the Roman Abbot of ——.

"The Abbot of —— asks the Abbot of —— for assistance.

"The Abbot of ——, assisted by a Methodist plumber, locates the evil.

"Result, conversion of the whole Anglican community."

When asked by a friend to help a friend to an Anglican living, he wrote:

June 11, 1911.

I think that an agnostic and a papist should intrigue to get a curate of the Church of England a Living is one of those Gilbertian situations which could only take place under the Constitution which you pretend you want to destroy. It is irresistible, and I have written to Sir William a letter that will break a heart of stone. I know you would not put me on to a wrong man.

Concerning a Mr. Hey's demand for the inspection of convents, he wrote (November 19, 1907) to the *Yorkshire Herald:*

It will be found in all probability that the true English of it is this: "I, Robert Hey, of Pickering, heartily detesting Popery, Idolatry, Mariolatry, Jesuits, indulgences, images, Holy water, and crosses, and fully believing all that I am told concerning the subtle craft and guile of Papists, Jesuits, Nuns, and other Romish sects, and being on that account unable to sleep in peace lest I be murdered by Cardinals in disguise, nor yet daring to venture abroad after dark lest I be drugged, kidnapped and made a Carmelite

> monk against my will, do rejoice with great joy that Lord Helmsley has declared with exceeding boldness that he desires to inspect those nests of wickedness and devilish superstition called Convents." I may be misjudging Mr. Hey, but I am pretty certain that the majority of persons who clamour so loudly for the inspection of Convents are impelled by some such ideas, and I cannot conceive a better reason for not acceding to their request.

Tolerant as Mark was of any true religious belief, he resented any attack or parody upon his own with passionate and sarcastic violence. He set out somewhat regardless of his county popularity and political chances to assert a flamboyant loyalty to the Catholic Church. The production of Hall Caine's *Eternal City* by Sir Herbert Tree led to the earliest of his journalistic acts of faith, for he wrote to *The Times* on October 24, 1902:

> To hear the *Miserere* and *De Profundis* sung by "Supers" as incidental music to the most pitiful claptrap that ever offended human intelligence, to see pantomime Cardinals and comic monks bowing before a doddering and senile Pope, is more than it is possible for a believing Roman Catholic to bear without indignation. To hear the Pope insulted is annoying, but to see him represented as a doting Struldbrug cannot be tolerated. What would be the feelings of an English Churchman if the Archbishop of Canterbury was introduced as comic relief in a Drury Lane melodrama? What would the Turkish Ambassador think if the Sheikh-ul-Islam was portrayed by Mr. Dan Leno in a patter-song at the London Pavilion? How would a Nonconformist appreciate a clowning representation of a Methodist Conference on the sawdust of the London Hippodrome?

On the whole Tree was wise to "decline the honour of being drawn into a controversy," and Mark wrote delightedly to Monty James:

> I have in fact drawn Mr. Herbert Beerbohm Tree, which causes me much joy. I love the fine old Costigan Spirit, "Oi would not demean mesilf be grawnting ye the honour of tweakin' ye be the nose!" O, I wish I could do the "Eternal City" for you. The Pope is the most glorious old ass that ever walked. He is in fact the "good old man" from "Stageland" in a white silk frock, and the most delightful little rim of cotton wool round his head; there is also a charming monk who breaks the seal of confession to the Chief of Police, all for the best of course."

When questioned as to his loyalty, he wrote to the Rector of Burton Agnes:

> Tell the people the King trusts me with his armed men. He is my Temporal Lord to whom I am bound by my oath of allegiance. The Pope is my Spiritual Lord, and to him I am bound by conscience as regards matters of FAITH and MORALS. "Render unto Cæsar, etc.," is my motto. Thousands of R.C. soldiers have fallen in battle for England. The late Queen Victoria visited my school, Beaumont, in order to thank one of the boys who helped to seize a man who assaulted her; her autograph picture stands in the guest-room of the school to-day. In the Chapel is a bronze showing the names of the boys who fell in South Africa."

As to the law concerning blasphemy, he wrote with refreshing wisdom to those who wished to amend it:

> *January* 9, 1912.
>
> If there were no law to prevent it and a man used in my presence filthy expressions about God or His Blessed Mother, I trust I should have the courage to knock him down or at least try to; the present excellent laws prevent my being obliged to do this and defend me from having to

> cause breaches of the peace, as well as protecting me from endless annoyance of having to pay fines and go to prison. As I prefer that your friends should go to prison instead of me, I shall not sign your petition.

Assaults in the Tory Press on his religion in its Irish aspect he was almost alone among Conservative Catholics in resenting. When Kipling's infamous jingles appealing to the Ulster sediment appeared (April 11, 1912) in the *Morning Post*, he wrote:

> I submit that this is a direct appeal to ignorance and a deliberate attempt to foster religious hatred. If students want to know what Ireland (Belfast and Ulster apart) will be like under Home Rule, it is rather to Portugal and France that they must look than to Bavaria and Austria. . . . Meanwhile those who call upon the people of England and Ulster to fight against Home Rule, because Catholics will abuse the liberties of Protestants, are doing an ill-service to the cause of Christianity and the cause of Unionism. To transform the bulwarks of belief into battering rams of mutual destruction seems to deny every rule of policy, sense or propriety.

Replying to a similar outburst in the *Daily Telegraph* against the "monstrous despotism" of the clergy in Ireland, he wrote a noble tribute to the *Soggarth-aroon* (June 10, 1913):

> One glorious band of brothers has stood by Ireland's poorest and most wretched people in the darkest hours of her troubled history. The native Irish found in the Catholic priesthood a friend, who alone remained to console the dying, to bury the dead, to help the living to live, and this in spite of proscription, penal laws and a whole library of inhuman statutes and enactments. In the dark days of

civil strike in Belfast it is the priest who pours oil on troubled waters, who by cajolery and entreaties draws the infuriated people either from the orange and green fight or from the conflict between the civil power and the strikers. In the foulest slums the Irish priest goes fearless of sickness and contagion. In the wildest Atlantic weather it is he who leads the lifeboat's crew. In the heat of England's battle it is an Irish priest who gives courage to English Catholic soldiers.

CHAPTER VI

CATHOLIC TRAVEL

IT is interesting to add Mark's fleeting impressions when travelling in Catholic atmosphere—Spain in 1911 and Rome in 1918—preserved in letters which he wrote to his wife:

February 28, 1911.

Well, we landed as I told you last night. It was the last day of the Carnival, so although I was half asleep I went out and saw the most extraordinary sights. Carnival in Oran is merely a collection of roughs and ladies of the city, dressed in dirty clothes and screaming. Here at Cartagena it was quite different; the whole of the girls of the town (with their mammas) sat about four deep on each side of a long street illuminated with dimmed lanterns, the whole of the male population walked up and down throwing confetti. Not one rude act or one unpleasant word or one drunken man. Soldiers, sailors, officers and everyone else, rich and poor, patrolled in this way. The girls looked extraordinarily pretty and were wonderfully well-bred and natural, the men very jolly. So to bed, up at 4.30 to come here, arrived here 9 A.M., and fell into the hands of the vilest, stupidest and most thievish guide I have ever met.

Murcia is *not* a pretty town and has no good buildings. The guide robbed me all day until Jacob and I grew weary, and started off speechless to fend for ourselves. No one in Spain talks anything but Spanish. No one in Spain cares about anything or takes any notice of anyone. There are tremendous good manners, but no interest in anything. There is no map of Spain in Murcia, no one knows anything about horses or mules or travelling, though the thievish guide said he could provide me with three horses at fifty francs a day *each*, but I did not give him the opportunity. Everything is cooked in oil; Spanish oil is made of olives purposely allowed to rot. Milch goats and cows abound, but there is no butter; the tobacco is the filthiest gunpowder and pepper. The Cathedral is a very poor building, and the only objects of interest in the town are some ghastly statues with teeth, hair, glass eyes and real clothes. The manners of Spaniards are strange. You salute and bow and pay compliments, but pick your teeth with a fork with your hat on in a restaurant. You are supposed to grovel to shopkeepers, and if you don't they are offended and won't sell you anything.

It is a disgraceful thing to bargain, but the shopmen ask strangers about eighteen times the value of anything, and are offended if you express any opinion of the justice of their demands. Now for some good points. The religion is real, and down to the very root of things; everything in the churches is *well* and reverently done, the singing is pleasant; in fact it is just the happy mean between English stiffness and Italian slipshodness. The interiors of the Churches are masterpieces of colour, that is of light or rather dark effects; a solid gold altar-back, a vast marble altar, a hideous doll in a gilt and rag cope, when lit by two small lamps and a tiny window in a vast building, are wonderfully beautiful, just as fifteen male voices and a 'cello and bass viol sound extraordinary under a dome. Well, so long as we were in Murcia the guide, who would not go, made life unbearable; we gave him the slip and got away to a church, where there was a Jesuit, pronounced "*Khaysveet*," who was born in Ireland, and left thirty years ago as a boy of twelve. Anyhow, he could talk English, and gave me twelve invaluable sentences on a half-sheet of notepaper. Thence to a cab-rank, where we found a man who agreed to take us to this place. This morning we escaped from the den of thieves, less two hundred francs stolen from us under various pretexts. The Murcians are really good people, and all explain that the guide and the hotelkeeper are anti-clerical Catalans. The Murcians are obvious Arabs, much more Arabs than the Algerians. If this puzzles you I will explain: the Arabs conquered North Africa and settled in Spain, they Moslemized the North Africans but drove out the Spaniard, and intermarried with the remnant. When the reconquest came they undoubtedly became Christian under pressure. I haven't time to give you my whys and wherefores, but I can make you out my case if you will remind me. Well, at eight this morning we began getting ready, at two we started in a cart.

I have not seen a single sore back or a single horse or mule ill-treated, which shows that at least Murcians are not cruel. We passed men dressed in really striking uniforms, with brass buttons and red facings, holding little hoes in their hands; they were *Pœnos Camineros*, "men who mend the roads"—a very odd type of *fonctionnaire*. Of course they do nothing at all, but are very proud, civil and ornamental. The road ran through country half like Jericho, half like Damascus, with a touch of Anatolia. The girls and children are really extraordinarily pretty; you know what Arabs with brown faces and red cheeks are like, I think.

PROVINCIA DE MURCIA.

My journey continued. We rode from Mula to Bullas and from Bullas to Cehejin, and from Cehejin to this place, crossing wooded hills, passing country houses with extraordinary wild gardens and trees, and every two hours passing through a town about the size of Driffield, only more picturesque than I can tell you. Every one has a church, which is certainly beautiful in light effect within, if nothing else. We rode upon donkeys for twenty-five miles. Here in Caravaca are about 30,000 inhabitants. They say that they have never seen an Englishman before. There is a Moorish castle on the hill up which I climbed: an old priest and three policemen and a perfect horde of children were standing in the door of an extraordinary Chapel of red marble in the middle of the castle ruins. I went in, and as I genuflected the old priest looked very curiously at me. Presently he motioned to me to come to the Altar, which I did; he slipped on a Cotta, a child fetched a bell, and everyone crowded up to the rails. I was taken on to the Altar steps, the old priest knelt down, the child rang the bell, the priest opened the Tabernacle, the child rang again, the priest took out a purple cloth and knelt, the child rang again; then he opened the cloth and produced a something that blazed with light, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and opals—a cross about six inches long. *Hoc est Lignum Crucis*, said the priest, and gave it me to kiss, and then to the children and the policemen. This is a famous relic, and is called the Cross of Caravaca. I did not sleep at all last night because of bells. I can write no more—I am done.

I write this under depressing circumstances. After leaving Yeste we got into a snowstorm. I got a cold and have had it for the last six hours, beginning with shivers for three hours, sore throat for six hours, cold in the nose for the next ten hours, and now bronchial catarrh and *earache*. I hope to be well by morning. Well, I am getting very sick of Spaniards and their ways; they are such conceited fools they do not realize that:

A. They have lost South America.
B. Lost North Africa.
C. Lost Cuba.
D. Lost the Philippines.
E. Been thrashed silly by the Moroccans, because they are stupid, proud and lazy. The babu class in Spain try to put all misfortune down either to the Monarchy or the Church, when as a matter of fact it is their hopeless conceit and hopeless incapacity that is the cause.

Do you know that there is no such thing as an Ordnance Survey in this country? There is no such thing as a room with a fireplace in it, there is no such thing as oil that does not stink, there is no such thing as an eatable dish. They have the finest pigs but no eatable bacon or ham, the finest cows but no eatable (or uneatable) butter, eggs but no decent dish made of eggs, and so on. I have seen the most wonderful rich country and lived like a dog therein because the inhabitants are such fools; the good manners are only skin deep. Behind the dignity there is a sulky fool who can't, won't and doesn't want to learn anything. The

Church seems to me like the Spaniard's cruelty, very much maligned. The people are devout and pious, but not at all ignorant or superstitious; that is to say, they know exactly what they are doing. The stories of cruelty as far as these Southern people are concerned are absolute fabrications. I am going to bed now. I awoke this morning cured; you know what a relief that is. Now roughly my plans are ride to Caceres, go to Seville and Cordova, Madrid and Burgos. When one is in health this country is very amusing.

Now before I wind up let me tell you that *chaussées* in Spain are worse than the worst in Turkey, but that the Spaniards are so incredibly lazy that they scarcely ever ride, that I have passed the most beautiful Churches, and eaten the vilest food; but, again, Spanish inns, houses, cottages, etc., are scrupulously clean. Here is another surprise: there is hardly any glass in Spain; the windows are grilled and shuttered. Imagine the darkness and cold. Here is another surprise: the smallest country towns are lighted with electric light! Again, even on the railways a stranger is a creature so rare as to be worth staring at—that is, off the main lines. I am going to write to you every day; I shall wire my next post town to-day.

At Caravaca I shifted for myself and got two donkeys, two muleteers and two horses. The caravan horses were a pair of greys about sixteen hands high, about thirty years of age, and evidently used for carriage work and occasional displays of *haute école;* they had horribly light mouths, weak legs and scraggy necks. This outfit took us to a village called Sabinar with a church. We went to the Church and found a weird figure dusting inside. Where is the priest? I am the priest! You? Yes, me! You? Yes, me! And with a grin he turned his back and showed the only outward visible sign of his trade in the form of a tonsure. The village was much poorer than most Arab villages, but cleaner. As it was too late to go on, we put up for the night in the Posada. The business of getting dinner, stabling and bedding was most amusing; it was all done by the ladies—mamma, auntie and about five daughters and nieces. They pulled all my things to pieces, ate the sugar, and seized the hair-wash and sprinkled their heads with it; they also stole a cake of soap. However, they cooked an excellent dinner and apparently took great pleasure in watching me eat it. After dinner twenty young men came in and sat in a row and watched me, under the superintendence of the village policeman—a ragged old man with a brass plate on his stomach. The trouble was to get to bed. The men were bundled out, but the ladies would *not* go. The bed was made and we made signs, but it would avail nothing, until at last I opened the door leading into their apartment and looked very cross and swore in English, so the younger ladies at last took their leave; but Mamma and Auntie absolutely refused, so I had to act as if they were not there. Just as I was going to sleep a man came in with two mules and wanted to stable them in the room, and was only driven out with difficulty. We started at seven and rode here. The scenery is something splendid, mountains and forests like Kastamuni; the peasants are delightful, the townspeople less so and apparently intensely stupid. I was delighted with this town. They have never seen an Englishman before. There are two churches, a prison made out of an old Moorish castle, with seven prisoners and a jailer. The prisoners walk about with irons on their legs. The church is about 1350. The inn is an old convent, and about as ghoulish a place as you could find. Here is a plan of my room: the beds are like tombs. I have my own, thank goodness. It is ten-thirty. Good night. I cannot sleep for bells and clocks, but I am going to have a try.

Piedra Buena.
March 11, 1911.

I am on the road again. Yesterday after I had finished writing to you I went out and saw the Cathedral, a very poor affair, and also St. Pedro, which is a very beautiful old Gothic Church. You may not be aware that the Spanish way of treating Gothic Churches has not been very satisfactory. The procedure is as follows:

Take King's College Chapel, block up all the windows in 1620, put up altars every six years from 1720 to 1845, paint all the stalls green in 1820, blue in 1850, and yellow and red in 1870 but never scrape off the colours, paint the groining pink and the background pale blue with gold stars, open one of the blocked windows in 1848 and fill with English stained glass, hang pictures of hell and martyrdoms of Saint Lawrence on the walls beyond the reach of a duster, move the choir to the back of the Church in 1730, block up the main door, knock a hole in the chancel and make that the door, put a statue in a winding sheet, with half-closed glass eyes that roll, laid full length on one of the altars—in the dark it looks like a real corpse; light a little red lamp under a crucifix life-sized, with real hair, and blood varnished to shine in the flickering of the lamp; put a statue of our Lady in black crape and silk, with a crinoline, gum-tears on cheeks, glass eyes, real hair, cover with gold, silver, brass, tinsel, put in a glass case, and cut a squint in the wall so that the light shines horribly on a white face in a dark cell; fill every spare corner with candlesticks, vases, lecterns, benches, clear away all chairs and put down rush-mats, and you have an average Spanish Gothic Church. However, I was shown the best vestments, and they were enough to make your mouth water; about 1700 and one 1595, stiff with gold and silver thread, with flowers of all colours. Here is a cheery little chasuble for black masses. [White silk skulls and bones on crimson silk on black velvet.] The priest said regretfully, "It is now forbidden!"

There is something singularly ghoulish about Spanish ornament that I cannot quite understand or see the force of. I went to High Mass this morning, and again noticed that everything was very well and carefully done; there was no slobbering or scuffling, everything most dignified under the control of one in the strangest of habits. What the origin of the nut-brown wig and enormous *paper* collar is I don't know, but he never leaves the Celebrant's elbow and at the Elevation remains standing; he thumps with his mace when anything has to be done; he is not a cleric, because I met him afterwards when he was much less impressive.

By the way, Spain is a very singular country; everybody smokes in Spain, yet you cannot find a decent tobacconist.

VILLARTA DES MONTES.
March 13, 1911.

The journey continues. Last night we slept at Arroba, a tiny town where I found an old Moorish Mosque being used as a Church. Travelling in Spain is variegated and amusing. The houses are scrumptiously clean.

GUADALUPE.

I broke off from sheer fatigue two days ago, and now take up my pen again. Well, we have done four hard days, first to Arroba, second to Villar des Montes, third to Alia, fourth to Guadalupe. The first day we rode through a wild empty country, and landed at a village with an old Mosque, now a Church. The children (Spanish children rule the roost completely) took charge of me and made a song, "The Englishman is bigger than Andalusian Bull," and accompanied me round the town. Each night I slept in a *posada* —Spanish for pub. There is one kitchen, a yard leading into a stable, and a bedroom of state in every Spanish inn. The kitchen consists of a fireplace wherein generally twenty or thirty people sit and talk. The yard is something between a shop, a stable and a fighting ground, where everybody quarrels, buys, sells and baits such animals as are not going to put up for the night. The bedroom of state consists of a room about ten by ten, containing a bed usually a huge wooden structure some four feet high, with a huge conical (I say conical) mattress, quilts, coverlets, sheets, blankets, etc. On the wall hang glittering pots and pans, warming pans and sweatmeat boilers. Between them various gory and terrific religious pictures of saints: At Guadalupe, where a surprise awaited me—a large ruinous monastery with a complicated Gothic Church enclosed a Shrine with a statue, the story of which is this: the statue is said to have been carved by St. Luke the Evangelist. Anyhow, it was given to the Bishop of Seville in the eighth century, it was buried when the Moors came, and found by a shepherd in 1300 after the Moors had gone. It was enshrined at Guadalupe, and round it has grown this extraordinary place; there are nine pictures by Zurbaran, each one of which is a masterpiece—something like Sargent. They are portraits of monks, in the Sacristy. There are one hundred and fifty illuminated MSS. of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, in the Sala there are seven copes and vestments with £150,000 worth of seed-pearls and large pearls on them, there are reliquaries and plate and carvings and ivory, and bronze statues, and urns, and gold and silver, and crosses and mitres, and pictures and gorgeous writing-desks, and damascened tables, and reliquaries, and wax-flowers, and paper ornaments, and emeralds, and wood carvings and plaster casts, and clocks and watches, and I know not what more, and half the place is in ruin and half is let out in houses. In fact such a warren of piety, squalor, dust and wealth and picturesqueness I have never in my life come across. I have seen many things, but never anything like Guadalupe. I have taken photographs of such as is worth photographing, and all this is gathered round a little wooden image about three feet high. Now this may not be an age of miracles, but consider that all this enormous wealth was looked after from 1835 when the monks were expelled until 1909 when the Franciscans took charge by one parish priest with 500 francs per annum. Fling this in the teeth of anyone who says anything about Spanish priests.

IN THE TRAIN BETWEEN CACERES AND CORDOBA.

March 17, 1911.

At Trujillo I got your telegram, also a real Spanish hotel dinner provided by two ladies rather like Lady Grosvenor for charm and casualness. Spanish ladies seem all the same—huge black eyes and tiny hands and feet, and always well dressed, powdered, and rouged. I wish you were here to compare them with harem ladies. I cannot help thinking they must be the same except for the dressing.

To take a ticket in Spain is a long business. The man writes as much as he knows about your history on the ticket and cuts it in half with a pair of scissors, and then copies what he has written on the other half into the book; he puts the book in a press, and then stamps the ticket with an iron stamp; he then gives you your ticket, so to the train—which, as I have told you, stopped here. I rushed out with Jacob to see the sights—i.e., a Roman bridge and a Roman theatre. The bridge is poor compared with Diarbekir, the theatre good but dull. As Jack would say, one Roman theatre is very much like another. In the morning at seven I sallied forth to see the Churches, and found Santa Maria Mayor a surprise—an old Gothic Church with a Gothic Retable, of gold, say 1520, perhaps 1480:

A. High altar.
B. A Bambino—vile doll.
C. A Madonna—vile plaster doll 1840.

Each picture on wood superb, as good as anything in the National Gallery. When I go there I will tell you whether Dutch or Italian; I am almost sure Dutch. I found six iron candle-holders stuck in the beautiful woodwork, spreading grease and filth in every direction. I found one picture had been repainted by the Sacristan. I produced five francs and pulled out the candle-holders. I made the Sacristan throw them away, and as the priest hardly ever comes they will not be missed.

I have an idea of a tour in this country which would be amusing and useful to the world at large—i.e., to work out the Peninsular War step by step, and photograph each battlefield and strategic point, travelling always by caravan. It would make a splendid lecture.

GRANADA.
March 19, 1911.

I discovered that there is nothing in Cordova but the Cathedral. Now Cordova Cathedral is one of the things of the world. You may put it at once on a plane with St. Sophia, the Pyramids, the Taj, York Minster. It is the most wonderful place, but you have to stop in it for four or five hours, as I did, before you can appreciate its wonder and accept the additions with patience. Now let me try and give you a hint: it is a square building one hundred yards to the side and not above thirty feet high. It is a mosque like the al Azhar, only four times the size. It has a vast forest of low, short columns; this may just give you an impression which no photograph can give. Now into the middle of this forest has been plumped a huge cruciform choir, with wooden stalls of extraordinary beauty, and a plaster ceiling of wondrous ugliness with angels of this kind crawling about. Now this choir is not only plumped down in the middle of the Mosque, but springs up above it. Now, remember, in the colonnades the light is dark pink, yellow black and red and grey, in the choir bright light. Now everyone curses this choir, spoiling a wonder of the world, etc., but since it is there it must be accepted. There is certainly something bold and triumphant in impressing the cross on the mosque. It is Spanish—it is right in a sense, the cross has triumphed here. The Koran can never return. In the choir canons chant. The antiphons are all of Philip the Second, and are all of parchment, and are all illuminated, and are all three feet broad and four feet long per page.

All round and about are Chapels and tombs and altars. I went to Mass this morning, and never did I see anything more beautiful than the Low Mass in the side Chapel. It was at nine, and the people clustered round, say about two hundred, a mere handful, but still, the women sat on the floor and the men stood, and the priest said Mass as St. Thomas Aquinas might have done, such grace, such dignity, while an impish little boy, the server, ran in and out trying to total the number of communicants before the offertory. While the server was thus engaged an old beggar took his place. After Low Mass, I went to the High Altar to hear as much of High Mass as I could between nine-thirty and eleven. High Mass takes some time in this country. As it was St. Joseph it was white. The High Mass was something such as you have never seen, because the canons, the cross-bearer, the three priests, each had a little troop of impish boys in red cassocks and peculiar white cottas, and as the grown-ups vied in dignity, the imps vied in mischief. Thus, of course, they never so much as whispered, but I never saw such real devilry written on children's faces. The oldest are about ten, the youngest seven, and they simply swarmed. Presently there came a canon to preach. Spanish preaching is not like Italian, it is argumentative with home thrusts. The scene as the canon preached was very beautiful.

I have seen the Alhambra, and I may say I have never been more grievously disappointed. It is puny, weak, small, decadent; there is no go or force in the thing; it is the only surviving remnant of those enormously over-rated people the so-called Moors—the bastard descendants of the hangers-on of the first Arabian conquerors—and it is typical of them. If you say that the Alhambra is pretty you have said everything that there is to be said. It is pretty—it is as pretty as Earl's Court Exhibition when it is closed and the plaster cracks and the grass grows in the chinks—but, remember, it is a tiny little place about the size of Sledmere, and has not one single feature of real architecture—interminable plaster and stucco—there is not a dome or a minaret or a column worthy of the name, the outer walls are mere rubble, the inner walls are hidden; the whole thing is a crazy orgy of weak yet intricate ornament. The dining- and smoking-room of this hotel are done in the same way and are just as good; the method is as cheap as dirt—puddle cement and mould in wooden or metal moulds and clap on the wall. This is all—the beginning and the end. Whether you paint the plaster or not, it is a mechanical process with a wearisome mechanical result.

As against this, the Cathedral is superb—a monument of strength and grace. Fergusson says it is the best Renaissance Church in the world, and he is perfectly right. I have seen nothing like it anywhere else. There is a breadth and height which you hardly ever see combined, there are sure to be evil features but it is a great building, achieving what you could scarcely imagine in a Renaissance Church, that is solemnity and mystery. There are some good books in the choir, sixteenth century Antiphons, and a very wonderful side chapel where Isabel and Ferdinand are not buried but lying in lead coffins. Philip le Bel and his poor wife are disposed of in the same way in the same vault. There are no good vestments, but some chalices, etc. The gem of Granada I saw this afternoon; it is the Cartuja, the old Carthusian Monastery, eighteenth and seventeenth century. It is all that self-sacrifice, money and piety can make it. Such marvellous richness fairly takes one's breath away; there are huge doors of silver, tortoise-shell and ivory, there are desks of tortoise-shell and mother-of-pearl, there are Old Masters hanging on the walls, there is a sacrarium perhaps forty feet high with a huge shell carved out of one piece of pink marble, there are twisted porphyry columns, there are columns of sandal-wood, there is ornament, there are pictures, there are brazen balustrades; it is a wonder of wood, metal and stone, and though the desks cannot be worth less than £1,000 a-piece, though the pictures are priceless, there is only one poor priest to look after everything; yet the place is scrupulously clean, and when I gave five francs he was astonished.

CASTILLO.

. . . Now about my journey. I went no more to the Alhambra, but went again to the Cartuja and the Cathedral, where I met a Swiss Captain (regular) of artillery, a nice man, six feet five inches high. He was a Protestant, with a Catholic mother. We got talking with the priest of Cartuja, I stumbling on in Latin. The Swiss said to the priest: "I believe all religions are good." Replied the priest: "*Tu credis quod Deus non dixit*," which brought the conversation to an abrupt conclusion. I like the Spanish priests, but I am afraid that there is going to be trouble over the Religious Orders. There is no doubt that the anti-clericals have this *prima facie* case:

A. The French *expulsés* have poured in here and make embroidery, wine, spirits, linen, toys, sacred objects, clothes, dresses, carpentry.

B. They are not liable to inspection under equivalent of factory acts.

C. They pay no rates or taxes.

This, remember, is true; it is also true that celibates living in Community can undercut outside labour for a start, and exemption from taxation improves the handicap in their favour. Obviously a law of Religious Associations engaged in industry is a right and necessary thing. In England it exists under the Companies Acts, Factory Acts, and Rating Acts—as *per contra*, altruistic freemasons and others desire the destruction of religion and make use of the above *prima facie* case on which to hang oppressive and destructive legislation. It seems to me quite incomprehensible that the Vatican should adopt a policy of absolute " intransigeance," when in fact it should rather initiate and control the regulation of this sort of business.

MADRID.

To-day I have seen, yesterday I went to, the picture gallery. It really does take one's breath away. I spent two hours in the Velasquez room; there is certainly nothing like it in the world. I cannot help thinking that representation of things seen culminates in the picture of the children in the studio. (Las Meninas.) More no man will ever do, for in that picture Rembrandt could not have done more with light or any other man with flesh, clothes, furniture, perspective and character. It is the most beautiful work. Velasquez is like Shakespeare, and I am sure worked to live, and never talked about art except as a business to be improved and improved and better done. I wrote to the Duke of Alba, with whom I was at school, and found a most gorgeous person who has asked me to dinner. I lunched with him.

Two previous Hispanic impressions, being of a religious vein, may be recorded here. From South Africa he once wrote to his wife-to-be comparing a vivid Passion Play he had seen in Mexico with the commercial artificiality of Ober Ammergau :

July 9, 1900.

Your impressions of Ober Ammergau interest me. I was very glad to hear the people laughed at Judas. You saw it all wrong. This that you saw was Utopian; it was not the old Middle Age mystery in the least. It was noble. It was æsthetic (in the right sense), but it was not the Passion Play. I (I pride myself) have seen in Mexico the True and Wonderful Mystery of St. John of God. That was the real Passion (or Mystery), not a knot of cultured saints, but the real mediæval audience, savage, bloody, and believing Christians, the true mediæval type, ready to kill or pray. St. John of God was the hero, his servant the clown, and the Seven Deadly Sins were the remainder of the cast. St. John exhorts. The people cheered and wept. Murder and Revenge personified kill one another. The people roared with delight, and encored the killing. St. John begs in the streets. All the Vices and passers-by refuse him. At last a proud Hidalgo typifying Charity snatches off his jewelled sword and belt, and purse, and gives it to the Saint. This raised the populace to a frenzy; they rushed on the stage and carried the Hidalgo round the theatre, and only after they had finished and loaded him with cigars (which he smoked among the audience) could the play proceed. Then St. John's servant, the clown, threw Avarice into a river, and banged his head with a cudgel. St. John interferes, and for the first time the audience were dissatisfied. This is the true mediæval spirit, honest villainy and piety, but from your description Ober Ammergau is *not*. They are a kind of Ruskinian, Utopian people, pious, good, kind and remarkably like you. The only touch of mediævalism seems to have been the laughter at Judas. In the old plays, Judas, Herod and Pilate danced a harlequinade, and then were torn to pieces by Beelzebub and his friends amid roars of laughter.

A note survives from Rome during a war-time visit to the Vatican, where he found Mgr. Cerretti "very pleasant, quick and keen":

April 15, 1917.

I find time again to write a line though there is very little to say. I went to High Mass at St. Peter's this morning, which Cardinal Merry del Val attended. It was in a side chapel. It looked except for the Altar very like an English Law Court, the Cardinal looking just like a Judge and the

Canons like Lawyers. The singing was very pleasant indeed, I could hear every word, and it was not like Westminster. A horrible innovation has been introduced here, viz., electric-light candles and altar lamps, all save the Sanctuary lamp. The effect is very vexing indeed. This afternoon I went round a number of Churches, all very full of people sitting about and saying their prayers.

An impression of Rome at the end of the world war:

November, 1918.

We are going to a High Mass at the Sistine Chapel before leaving, which is a great privilege. I must say after eighteen months in an office this is a real holiday. I have been delayed another day here, so went to the Sistine Chapel at leisure. The picture is very beautiful. (The ceremony was the annual Requiem for the last Pope.[1]) The Chapel itself, you know, is very tall and spacious. It gives the impression of being about one-half the length and two-thirds the height of King's, the whole lined with the famous cartoons, which are, if a little foggy and faint, still very beautiful.

As to the general impression, it is annoying. You find yourself suddenly in the Chapel amidst Swiss Guards and Chamberlains of, say, the early seventeenth century, and amid green benches like the H. of Lords divided from the Chapel by a beautiful screen with a golden grille, not thick enough to impede the view, but giving all beyond a touch of distance. Beyond, a platoon of Scarlet Cardinals, sitting like Peers in their robes, behind them the Orders, Black, White and Grey, secretaries, monsignors, bishops. In the centre a clump of cavalry (Noble Guard) with rather absurd uniforms, but not discordant. Behind is a box, well fenced in, containing the famous choir, and a conductor more exquisite, more intense, more preoccupied and more sympathetically magisterial than even Sir Henry Wood. A wonderful setting all this, and at the far-end the Altar and Papal Throne just like the House of Lords again. And

[1] Pius X.

around and about a mass of surpliced personages. So you get the colours, hazy frescoes, gold grille, green benches, red cardinals, black, white and grey orders, white surplices at the top, heavy velvet curtains of dark crimson, then a movement among the surplices and enter His Holiness [1] in a black-and-gold cope and a mitre of white silk. Then the Mass began, by Cardinal Merry del Val, who has a voice like a trumpet, the Pope on his throne, an extraordinarily striking figure, with jagged features and parchment skin. The choir sang, as I like a choir to sing, so that I could distinguish every word crisp and sharp, in sound instrumental rather than human, though there were no instruments. It was real and wonderfully grand. I only wish the babies and you had been there. Even Walter was moved to admiration. Beside me sat a little American novice from a Seminary, evidently swotting it up, I suppose, for a U.S. paper, so the Catholicity of the Church was punctuated and underlined and accented, for the boy was rapt with delighted fervour which resulted in the scratching of his pencil on paper and occasional little gasps of "Say!" "My!" "Wall!" "Cute!" "Fine!" which, of course, is just as it should be.

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[1] Benedict XV.

CHAPTER VII

LITERARY

MOST of my reading was done in a blockhouse at Rhenoster Bridge, South Africa. My library, weighing about forty pounds, was usually packed in a deal box and labelled 'Ammunition' or 'Biscuits.' I used to relieve the tedium between trench digging and patrolling by reading aloud extracts. Shakespeare was the favourite, Sterne second, Swift third, and Tennyson a bad fourth." So Mark wrote of the South African War, which gave him his literary training. He added: "Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall' I read in Kurdistan." His own favourite was Swift, about whom he wrote in the midst of wars to his future wife:

May 15, 1901.

If you want to see how Society is to be laughed at, read "Furniture of a Woman's Mind," "Polite Conversation," "Diary of a Lady"; there you can read the real satire, the real philosophy. He does not stick at anything which may tear and pain his victims; no allegory is too filthy, no abuse too gross, to heap on the heads of those who offend. He cares not if he rends himself so long as his foes are torn. Ah! did he but live now what a scope there would be for his pen; his bite is as deadly as that of a rabid dog, and, mind you, he does not preach. Think of the man's personality who by two lines of doggerel drove a man out of Dublin, to wit, Sergeant Bettesworth:

Like that Booby Bettesworth,
Half-a-crown o'er-pays his Sweat's-worth.

Bettesworth lost £900 a year by those two lines.

Think of Swift's humour on this occasion. When old and idiotic he had a lucid interval, during which he was taken for a walk by his keepers. Seeing a new building, he was told it was a magazine. That night he was more drivelling than ever, but a scrap of paper was found in his pocket on which was written:

O here's a piece of Irish sense,
  Here Irish wit is seen:
When all is lost that's worth defence
  They build a magazine.

As for Kipling, he wrote:

I am growing very surly. For instance, Rudyard Kipling's verses about the Blood River Bridge are very fine, but to me they convey about as much sense or meaning as the whistling of the wind. I've been through the whole thing he describes, and have never felt, seen or heard one single thing he describes. We only feel anxious when a train comes at night, and damned glad to see it away. And as for speech of women talking to men, if it gives pleasure to some to see sleek, fat Jews and their womenkind talking to one another, I am not one of those. The handful of week-old papers I have never yet seen, except Milner who gave us some and a "clurge" who gave us tracts. The heavens do not look more monstrous here than in many other parts of the world, and the mountains are neither cinnamon, amber, nor dun, but slate-coloured. The sunsets are generally pink and rather pretty; the rest of the poem I did not understand and so cannot criticize. Guards don't mount in the middle of the night, and gangers don't have sheds, and if your defences are full of empty tins the S.S.O. would soon talk to you. The wonderful north-bound train never travels at night, and if the details guarding the line are not combatants, then some 150,000 men are labouring under a serious delusion.

But of another poem he wrote: "I must say I greatly admire Kipling's 'Islanders.' It's just what the fat, sleek British public want, a good smack!"

During the war Mark managed to read Marlowe's "Faustus," Fielding's "Amelia" and "Tom Jones," Shakespeare, "Sartor Resartus," "Morte d'Arthur," and Plutarch's "Lives." Comparing Fielding with "The Visits of Elizabeth," he wrote:

September 17, 1900.

Your modern young lady greedily reads and understands that hussy Elizabeth and her Beldam of a mother, but would be fearfully shocked at Mr. Jones, and say that Fielding was a vile fellow to paint vice in such abominable colours, though I misdoubt not that she would enjoy that scapegrace Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," though she might shy at "Tristram Shandy," which is really very funny indeed. I have, as I told you, been reading aloud to the men. I mentioned, I think, the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Have you read that lately? I should like to read it to you, the old villain Falstaff is such a very lovable old man, and I felt quite sorry for him when he said: "I begin to perceive I am made an *ass!*" But he was quite satisfied when Page invited him to supper. What is very funny is that the men saw all the jokes.

I have been reading More's "Utopia." What a book! There is a man I would like to have known. How splendid a character, how lovable a man, yet he is little known, that wise, brave, pious, humorous sage, whose piety was embellished by reason and whose reason was ornamented by wit. If you have not read his life, and "Utopia," you must, I insist! My dear co-religionist, it should be an article of every Catholic Englishman's faith to read them. I have also been comparing Dickens and Thackeray. I can only imagine that Dickens is popular because he invents absurdly unimagined characters, and Thackeray because he paints life exactly as it is.

And at a Catholic bazaar opened at Filey he spoke thus of the connexion between Dickens and Thackeray with Cervantes and Spain (August 11, 1908): "We must ever be grateful to Spain for having given us the Elizabethan era. Without the sharp lash of apprehension which the Armada laid upon this country Shakespeare might have been an egotistical, purposeless and fatuous cynic, Raleigh a sordid ruffian, Drake a self-seeking adventurer, Elizabeth a miserly old woman, England a parcel of factions composed of babblers and cravens. Spain flogged England into Imperialism. The English above all people love Don Quixote because he is the father of many English sons. Hudibras is Quixote in a political pamphlet, Sir Roger de Coverley is Quixote with unobscured intelligence, Parson Adams is Quixote in Orders. Colonel Newcome is Quixote pure and simple, Pickwick is a Don Quixote of peace in white tights and black gaiters. It is delightful to think that if Sancho Panza had never been tossed in a blanket Sam Weller would never have been cross-examined by Sergeant Buzfuz. What Cervantes did for English literature perhaps Velasquez achieved for English painting. Just as Columbus showed the way to English sailors, so has Velasquez led English painters to truthful observation."

Thackeray, however, he always preferred to

Dickens. To quote from another South African letter:

> You like Dickens, do you? Well, truth to tell, I don't care about him at all. In not one of his books have I been able to discover any resemblance to real people or affairs. Of course they are splendid works, but they aren't real people like Thackeray's. Those are real, living people. You've met them all. I have at least, even including Colonel Newcome, who is an early incarnation of Pakenham. Have you read "Gulliver" lately; you should do so every six months. You should read all Swift's works; they are all masterpieces of style and good sense. A baby could understand them, though they give the philosopher food for reflection. You should read eighteenth century literature a good deal; it was the best century, the climax of the Christian era. Now you will find that the French Revolutionary year was the commencement of the present era of progress, grab, commercialism, light, blood, villainy, ignorance, disbelief, and science; how it will turn out I do not know, but it frames badly. I have, however, hopes of a great reaction in future ages, when science will decay just as art did. It is conceivable, and I think probable. Most likely a devastating plague will dislocate the world, followed by an Asiatic supremacy and a fresh deal all round. We shall not see it, but I think it will come all the same.

Upon Dr. James he later thrust his beloved Fielding:

> I forward you "Amelia," which you have got to read. I think you will admit that it is the greatest novel in the sense of depicting real life as it is in true perspective—that is to say, no particular person or passion being greater than the others, but just as they are. I commend Colonel Bath to you particularly; he is a very great friend of mine, as also Sergeant Atkinson. Booth is in a sense nearly every man I ever knew, and sometimes myself, and Amelia is the very best woman in the world.

Whenever he criticized he had something worth saying, whether he was right or wrong. To John Hugh Smith he wrote, after reading Disraeli's "Tancred":

May 6, 1907.

It is very wonderful. I suppose you have read it superficially; it is "the fatal fascination of the East and all that sort of thing," but there is a vast deal behind it. The true backbone of it is, of course, the Semitic and the nature-worshipper. But with all the glory (you know, if Dizzy had a weakness it was that he staged things as lavishly as his relative Beerbohm Tree) Dizzy grasped the Syrian, the Levantine and the Bedawi."

And to Father Hugh Benson, congratulating him on his "Lord of the World":

December 25, 1907.

If I may venture a criticism, I think you under-estimate the "spirituality" of the East. Even there Pantheists do not accept pure belly-worship as the end of all things. I have met not a few Richard Raynalls among the Dervishes on the Anatolian highways and even on the platforms of Turkish railway stations.

All the same, Mark could not help sketching the type of a Bensonian novel, of which the illustrated synopsis (see facing p. 125) read:

"Chapter I.—Alf Birdlime, a Methodist, buys a hairshirt at Burns and Oates in mistake for chest protector.

"Chapter II.—He suffers from sleeplessness, and his doctor prescribes foreign travel.

"Chapter III.—He goes to Rome, but experiences no relief.

"Chapter IV.—He accidentally makes the acquaintance of a Secretary of State.

"Chapter V.—Who divines the cause of Alf's discomfort.

"Chapter VI.—But explains that Alf's adventures can hardly be susceptible of a natural explanation.

"Chapter VII.—As an act of renunciation, Alf decides to become a Cardinal.

"Chapter VIII.—And this shocks his parents, sisters and brothers on his return."

Another outline of Catholic characters as Benson seemed to see them was sketched as follows:

"Hero at dinner party, raconteur, sportsman, M.P.—Same at home being scourged by a confidential deaf-mute valet, the only one who really knows.—Hero's father, a Duke, who has just learned that his son has sold the family estates without his knowledge and given proceeds to a Portuguese recluse. —Father Dominic, O.S.B., hero's first cousin, staying for the shooting with the Duke.—Ladies in love with the hero.—Two priests who think the hero is insane.—Monsignor Satanas, of Rome, who persuades the Bishop to excommunicate the hero for modernism. —Mr. Rolles, friend of the family, who thinks there is something remarkable about the hero.—Interview between Monsignor and Mr. Rolles in Bishop's sitting-room.—Happy ending. The Duke becomes a lay brother of Carmelites, the Bishop becomes a Trappist, Father Dominic takes to hunting instead of shooting, the ladies become Little Sisters and Carmes, Mr. Rolles thinks matters over and, on the recluse dying and leaving all his money to the hero, decides to act as his family friend, as neither of them are really suited for a higher life."

His criticism from Egypt of Pierre Loti is also sound, as of "one who owing to excess of brilliant qualities failed ever to come to grips with his subject. My Frenchman scintillates without illuminating; he sees too much and yet too little. Camels' souls, priest of Ammon Ra, Golden Deserts, Sinister Defiles, Historical Gossip, Archæological Reminiscences, Sunsets, Sunrises and minute and beautiful grammatical constructions."

All his life Mark retained a power of quoting the English classics. For instance, he found himself leaving Mardin in Asia Minor "amid the stares of some thousand people," and recalled Martin Chuzzlewit's send-off from Eden. And when Sir Arthur Markham criticized Kitchener in the House during the war Mark quoted from Shakespeare's *Tempest*: "Sirs, you do assist the storm and mar our office." On one Shakespearean point his Eastern experiences enabled him to offer a unique comment in the *Saturday Review*:

October 5, 1907.

I notice that some of your correspondents take exception to the representation of the blinding of Gloucester in the version of *King Lear* now being acted at the Haymarket. . . . It has been my fortune at certain times to live amongst peoples who are in exactly the same state of civilization as the characters described in *King Lear*. Though it is true that I have never witnessed an incident of such violence as that of the blinding of Gloucester, I have actually seen some that went near to it, and as a consequence during that brief scene *King Lear* ceased to be a play for me; it became an actual event. The ruthlessness of Regan, the grim determination of Cornwall, the helpless, frantic terror of Gloucester, the sudden protest of the servant, and above all the deadly hurry of the whole scene were portrayed with an exactness which was amazing to one who has seen similar actions in real life and similar scenes untruthfully represented on the stage.

On seeing Ibsen's *Pretenders* he immediately recalled "Nicholas Nickleby," and pointed out: "Not only does Dickens seem to have supplied the Scandinavian master with the machinery of drama, but gave the whole complex and tragic character of Earl Skule." For Ibsen's English apostle he had only angry words. After seeing *The Devil's Disciple*, by Bernard Shaw, in 1907:

Ah, only criminals are virtuous, only brave men are real cowards, only real cowards are brave, only clergymen are good soldiers, only soldiers are good clergymen, only religious people are irreligious, only devil-worshippers are true Christians, only women run after men, men never do anything for the sake of women, only black is invariably white and white is invariably black, 1 + 1 = 0 and 1 − 1 = 2. Walter had better join a "miniature rifle" club. It is less dangerous.

He was very impatient of modern artists in a humorous but crude fashion. We find him writing:

May 19, 1908.

It is, I have always thought, the patron and not the artist who produces the style. This is a view not generally shared and contrary to the dogmatic pronouncements of Ruskin and all other "art-talkers." The most beautiful building in India, the Taj, and the finest Mosques at Constantinople were the work of Italians, yet at the date when they worked art was at its lowest ebb in Italy. A vulgar half-educated public demands Lincrusta Walton and gets it, a decadent millionaire demands Sargents and is happy to be daubed and caricatured by an impressionist. A blasé half-witted theatre-going audience insist on being tickled, and it is tickled by the musical comedy and Bernard Shaw.

In the same year he wrote from the ss. *Heliopolis:*

> Then we have a great privilege. No less a person than Hall Caine is on board; his eye wanders for appreciative stares like Tree's; he seeks for apparently secluded spots whence he can be observed studiously oblivious to the world, save that he keeps glancing at his neighbours to see that they are really looking at him. Hall Caine has again passed!
>
> Arose 8 A.M., went on deck, passed a window, saw Hall Caine asleep; one eye, however, suddenly opened.

When a shoemaker in Beverley wrote asking him for a literary course, Mark replied at great length, advising him the following books to read in order:

The Book of Ecclesiasticus.

"The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius."

"The Imitation of Christ" (note and compare with Aurelius).

Bacon's "Essays" (material ideas).

Sir Thomas More's "Utopia" (theoretical politics).

Swift's "Voyage to Houyhnhnms" (last chapter in "Gulliver").

Act One of *Troilus and Cressida* (analyse character of Ulysses).

Plutarch's "Lives" (general study of great men).

Rosebery's "Life of Pitt" (for information).

Disraeli's "Tancred" and "Sybil" (fairly just analysis of the elements which have developed into the world in which we live).

Without making any of the promises of such systems as affect to teach "How to be a great writer in six lessons by post," he truly added, "if you carry it through carefully and wholly abstain from current literature during that period, you will find yourself in a more efficient state of mind than at present. You will find yourself not only a more effective critic, but a sounder builder, with more originality of conception and clearer ideas. You will also find your language and style improve rapidly and your views become broader and less uncompromising."

Mark's criticism was always very slashing. As he threatened from South Africa:

November 20, 1902.

How I will lash civilization and cant and humbug, and hypocrisy and cranks, and our dullness and frightful one-sidedness. How interesting it will be to point out the stupendous advantage of a daily lying paper as compared with the delightful gossip of the bazaars.

After the newspaper explosion following the Russian raid among the Hull fishing boats he wrote to Dr. James in Yorkshire dialect:

Your behaviour has been scandalous—wiring from St. Pancras, when you had almost passed my house on your way there from Victoria. What about the Baltic Fleet? They coomed tit wrong shop when they got started shutting at oor chaps fri' Ooll. I've 'eerd tell on a sight a deeds, bud A'm danged if iver I heerd owt o't'like o' this! Dam'd owd wimmin slabberin' aboot t'igh seas, why fowk like them ain't fit ti own a ship. Bud awiver oor chaps knawed all aboot it, and as soon as they'd gotten back to Ooll tha jist slipt in tit train an' away ti Loondon, ti tell t'king. An' yer knaw it wasn't as if it 'ad bin fishermen fri t'south; t'King knowed wat Ooll chaps was, and they towld 'im wat ti do, an' 'e's doon it an' all. Don't you think that is more like the real thing than the reporter's interview with a Hull fisherman:

I had scarcely composed myself to rest in my bunk in the forecastle, when I heard an unusual disturbance above; a mighty projectile struck our vessel with a fearful crash, which sickened my very soul. The lashing of the billows, the thunder of the guns, the reek and fume of battle dazed and confounded me, etc., etc.

An amusing parody of publishers' advertisements appeared in a letter to Edmund Sandars:

December 22, 1907.

Sample illustration of Joe Miller's tale of the Frying Bacon story, by Ethelwulf Clobber. Herewith the Daily Root-toots notice—*Yule-tide Novelties.* Possibly, since Eve's span in the mythic umbrage of Genesis, never has the world of infancy received such a luscious addition to the realm of pure, wholesome, savoury fun as Mr. Clobber's resuscitation of the "Merrye Mylur" (price 18s. 6d., Messrs. Brabber & Grumpus). Not only is every spark of wit set out in dazzling setting, but there is a texture, depth and breadth about Mr. Clobber's tone treatment that will make the older members of the hearth remember with satisfaction how great a distance Art has advanced in the last few decades, particularly "fun art," if we might coin a word. But Mr. Clobber has not only a complete mastery of technique and sub-tooling, but he has a method, and a message, which he delivers in black and white and red and a no uncertain voice, equipped with ringing notes of truth.

As for the usual run of book reviews he expressed total contempt;

Personally I set no store by reviews of any kind; it is the most pitiable humbug to read of "Mr. Sykes' brisk account of his sledge ride through Russian Asia Minor." Russian Asia Minor, ye Gods! Where is the place? I never heard of it, and certainly never went on a sledge there. This in the *Spectator* too! I have been severely handled by one paper, *The Christian Commonwealth*, who calls me a "bloodthirsty brute!" Of course that is mere Steadishness. All the rest have been one series of ignorant, meaningless praise. I don't want a critic to be a walking advertisement or an abusive cad; I want to have the faults pointed out for future guidance. Instead I receive praise which betrays its valuelessness by its ignorance, or abuse which is grotesque. I can perfectly imagine how it is done.

Editor: "O look here, here's a book by that young fellow Sykes! Cut it up! O no, he's a son of Tatton Sykes. You remember those trials, he'll be deuced rich!" Result: "Mr. Sykes' brilliant little production on his trip to Siberia shows energy, valour, and literary talent of no small order." And this is your precious Press, the "*Vox populi*," the fourth estate! Do you remember the great minister who said: "Poo. Half a dozen fools prating in a coffee-house think the noise about their ears is made by the world!" Well, that is the Press.

All the same, reviewers were consistently favourable to his works, possibly owing to their own ignorance of Eastern subjects. It is difficult not to adopt a stray sentence in the *Montrose Standard* which referred to "his impressionist style of massing the riotous incongruities of life in Turkish Asia!"

His sense of parody was highly strung. Afte his return from South Africa he started reading at Sledmere, with Edmund Sandars, recent military science, such as the "Infantry Drill Book" of 1896 and a "Handbook on Field Artillery" by Lieut.-Colonel

Pratt. The latter work contained a serious and hesitating comparison of the relative values of muzzle and breech loaders, while the former, on which the Boer War was fought, limited long-range rifle fire to 1,500 yards. The result of the spontaneous parodies which occurred to them both was a skit on the drill book under the fictitious authorship of "General George D'Ordel." D'Ordel's "Tactics" was completed in a fortnight, and neither author was ever able to point to a single phrase as his own or his colleague's, as each wrote in turn from the dictation of the other. The personality was evolved from their own minds, and it was only after publication that they learnt with distress that it had been taken as a personal caricature of the Duke of Cambridge. The skit was a success in Army circles (free copies being provided by practical jokers or reformers to the inner Council of the War Office), and 8,000 copies were sold. Among D'Ordel's definitions were the following: "Woods are often places so covered with trees that troops cannot see them," and "Front; the direction of the enemy, real or supposed." (This appeared in the drill book.) D'Ordel pointed out that the "real direction of the enemy should approximately correspond with his supposed direction," and instanced the constant disregard of the rule by the African rebels as the appalling result of acting on the experience of irregular warfare to the detriment of the art and science of war! Mark wrote complaining "of the levity with which it was received by many newspapers." But many took it seriously enough, including the *Beaumont Review*, and Solokov, the Zionist historian, who later wrote that "Mark gave a proof of his technical knowledge in his work on strategy and military training which he had compiled with Major George D'Ordel"! Doubtless, if the walls of Zion are ever fortified or Zionism mobilized, it will be on the principles embodied in Mark's immortal skit.

The success of the "Tactics" was followed next year by a work intended to be continued in a series of manuals on Politics, Journalism, and the Law. "D'Ordel's Pantechnicon" was to have been the covering title of the series, and his book on the art of manufacturing illustrated magazines, with its sample product, *Scragford's Farthing*, was published in 1904. This work is described in a letter in which Mark consulted Dr. James as to the propriety of the title, as follows:

> I have a question to ask you. Our magazine is now complete. It is based on the following lines: Prometheus D'Ordel, a retiring scholar, cousin of General George D'Ordel, has written a treatise on the Manufacture of Magazines, which he considers to be the highest form of literature; he has also made up a model to be carefully followed by all mechanics and workmen engaged in making magazines. Now D'Ordel's instructions are written in the best kind of English we can produce, copying Swift and Addison as closely as our brains permit. D'Ordel's model is, of course, in the vilest Journalese. Now will you allow us, as a man of learning and wit, to call the book "D'ORDEL'S PANTECHNICON"?

It was described as "probably some of the most brilliant nonsense ever written." Parodies of the work of Conan Doyle and Guy Boothby were apparent in the heroes, " whether a drugged detective in a dressing-gown or a nonconforming Spanish brigand with a beard shaped like a torpedo." There was a specimen of the " Inflated Instructive Article " called " London Gold Mines—a Day among the Dustmen."

Two years later a manual for statisticians, under the title of " Ananias," was written, but not printed. In this treatise the authors gave directions how to falsify facts without the direct untruth which would degrade the statistician to the level of the liar. Out of this manuscript Mark subsequently lectured on " Hints to Financiers and Statesmen on the Art of dealing with the Truth." He showed how holiday resorts could fake the weather chart, and that anything could be proved by statistics. For instance, " We could surprise people by saying that one pin represented the work of 75 men. Thus a single box of pins would be said to employ 12,500 men, and therefore if the yearly consumption of pins were reduced by 1,000 boxes, no fewer than 12,500,000 would be thrown out of employment." It was an echo of the arguments current in the Tariff Reform controversy. Mark could imitate the classics as well as parody the dunces. For instance, the perfect Macaulayese with which he greeted the opening of the King George Dock at Hull : " This structure may possibly outlive our language, our ideas, and even our name. It may be that professors in languages yet unknown may come across these great remains and quite doubtfully wonder what their purpose was ! "

Mark could practically take off anything, serious or comic. With a hundred words of Arabic he acted his way through the East. With a facility for Levantine French he dealt with French diplomats or their underlings at the Quai d'Orsay, and he accomplished such memorable feats as performing a pathetic imitation of Paderewski on an automatic orchestrelle, completely deceiving an elderly clergyman, who exclaimed, "I never heard a man play like that!" Possibly not.

Mark's literary and military hobbies and enthusiasms were often interwoven. His play, *Mr. Turnbull's Nightmare*, was a warning of German invasion similar to Du Maurier's *Englishman's Home*, but it was censored for fear of giving offence to a European Power, in spite of which, as he explained later amid the laughter of the House of Commons, it was subsequently acted in a school (Beaumont) before one hundred boys, their sisters and parents, and twenty-five clergymen! *The Commandant* was another of his plays acted at Beaumont.

His travels resulted not only in books, but in minute additions to the knowledge of the War Office. In 1903 he was thanked for his maps and reconnaissance in Asiatic Turkey. The process, apparently, was as follows: "H.E. (Sir Nicholas O'Conor) wrote to Foreign Office. Foreign Office wrote to Army Council, Army Council to War Office, and so into my record." In 1906 he was again thanked for work when he accompanied the Turkish Expeditionary Force to Rowanduz. As was afterwards written of him: "He mapped N.W. Mesopotamia and S. of Jerusalem. Did he suspect or foresee that we should one day have to fight there? The war was ten years distant then. But the War Office must have thanked whatever gods it believes in for the work he did there."

From the General Staff he received word: "The sketch map which accompanied the report has been retained, and General Grierson would request that a letter of thanks be addressed to Mr. Mark Sykes both for this and two other sketches received from him this year." (November 24, 1905.)

Perhaps an equally important matter occupied his mind in 1902, when he began to experiment with the painted gun, the first prelude of military camouflage in England. He realized that a lurid patchwork was a better disguise than plain khaki, and he painted a gun in stripes with colours taken from gamebirds. He had noticed that the varicoloured partridge was thus concealed by Nature. The *Daily Express* announced his experiment at Aldershot (October 4, 1902): "You take a gun, daub it over with blotches of red, blue and yellow, and immediately it becomes for all practical purposes invisible. This is the discovery which is said to have been recently pointed out to the military authorities by Captain Sykes, of the Yorkshire Militia."

In the following month Sir John French witnessed the test of placing a khaki gun beside two painted guns, which became invisible against fir trees. Mark pointed out that khaki produced a shape, but to become invisible it was necessary to become shapeless. With strange prevision the *Daily News* asked (November 7, 1902): "Is it possible that our huge battleships and monster cruisers will come out in stripes of red and blue and yellow?"

Mark took to lecturing on Moslem and military subjects. When not talking about Mohammed he was describing his hero, Marshal Saxe, and when not showing maps of Asia Minor he was tracing diagrams of Fontenoy. His love of Saxe, the illegitimate son of Augustus of Saxony, the first scientific soldier, the undefeated German Marshal of France, was lifelong. Mark found that nothing adequate had been written about him by the French because he was a German, by the Germans because he served France, or by the English because he defeated them and won back most of Marlborough's take. Saxe held up the English with ill-fed mercenaries, never risked a battle, and went to the front with dropsy. One winter he spent in Ghent fooling Europe and sending for French ballet-dancers and English prize-fighters. Then he suddenly surrounded and took Brussels. He could think in miles and minutes at the same time. So Mark set about righting Saxe in history. A note to Dr. James reads: "I want to show you my 'Saxe' who is coming on, I vary between wicked pride and grovelling despair. My only score so far is that I wrote an opinion of him which a week later I found word for word as a saying of Mme. de Pompadour."

Interesting letters on the subject are worth adding:

The *Yorkshire Post* has already reported Marshal Saxe five times. I don't think there is anything more to say, except "That he combined the rare attributes of boldness and caution, he knew when to take risks and when to be restrained; his misfortune was to have been a mercenary, fighting purposeless wars for the amusement of Versailles. His fame was eclipsed by Frederick the Great, who fought for a policy and for his own hand. There is no modern development of war which was not foreshadowed by Saxe in his 'Reflections on the Art of War,' produced in 1728. Some of the things he laid down at that time were: *A*. Breech-loading rifles. *B*. Quickfiring light field-guns. *C*. Khaki or inconspicuous uniforms. *D*. Skirmishers extended to ten paces. *E*. Pontoon detachments. *F*. Blockhouse systems. *G*. Detached forts for the defence of cities, as opposed to Vauban's system of close fortifications. *H*. Mounted infantry. *I*. Compulsory military service with linked battalions. *J*. Redoubts instead of fortified lines. *K*. An organized general staff.

"These developments, minutely detailed by Saxe in 1728, were never completely realized until 1804, some of them not until the last war (Russo-Jap.). Oddly enough, Saxe favoured the retention of body armour for heavy cavalry. Saxe was so far in advance of his times that he was despised as a visionary by Carlyle in his history of Frederick the Great."

Mark wrote a life of Saxe, which was published serially in the *Green Howards Gazette*. His description of the field of Fontenoy takes rank with the best military writing in the language:

> The battle was, tactically speaking, lost; the right and left flanks had missed success, the centre alone had secured any degree of advantage. Owing to the English failure on the right . . . line after line pressed closely together, like one great red brick; never in the history of war had so strange a thing been seen on a battlefield as this vast heavy mass of angry men. The French were stupefied. What would this gigantic, lumbering square of guardsmen, lines-

men, generals, cornets, grenadiers and drummers do? It advanced. The French fired salvoes of artillery at it, rent great bloody gaps in its sides, but still it advanced . . . ploughing a course through the very centre of the French army like a vast ship. Saxe himself cried out: "Is it possible such soldiers cannot be victorious?" . . . The wild Irish Brigade darted howling at its head, whole batteries of artillery charged with round shot, bullets, stones, broken glass or anything that could be crammed down the heated muzzles, belched their contents into its side at point-blank range. Every Frenchman and Irishman, every man on horse or foot near it, rushed forward with bayonet, sword, pike or rammer to avenge the first defeat; whole ranks were swept away. . . . Slowly the English fell back. They had been beaten by their own daring and the foresight of the marshal who knew them so well. At Fontenoy the English proved that, man to man, they were superior to the French, and Saxe proved that, in spite of it all, they might be defeated by Art, the most notable incident in the battle being that it was because the British broke through the French centre that they were utterly routed. . . . Of this battle Frederick the Great said it was the most glorious, for it was won by a dying man. At Fontenoy Saxe earned a place among the immortals.

A note of Hilaire Belloc's may be added (August 4, 1911): "Yes, you have thoroughly analysed the old gentleman. You say that Saxe has again been crabbed. The modern French military histories talk about him with any amount of respect. He was far and away the greatest general of that middle term time. Have you read Evan Charteris's Fontenoy in the *Edinburgh?* He is good. He is particularly accurate in the questions of distances, where Fortescue is wrong. This I say without crabbing Fortescue, whose works I think really remarkable considering the space they have to cover."

Mark's love of military detail and theatrical staging took him to the Military and Naval Tournament at Olympia. In 1912 he trained a squad of his regiment in the manual and firing exercises of 1749. He provided some Brown Besses used by Sledmere volunteers in Napoleonic days, and gave a revival of this complex and technical drill. The Green Howards learned their drill to perfection, and in spite of the twenty-one motions performed by beat of drum, they closely approached the old standard of nine shots to the minute from each file of men, "the acme of irritating precision," said *The Times.* In 1913 Mark was responsible for the pageant of "The Restoration of 1660," which involved, with only two rehearsals, the training of five hundred men. With Edmund Sandars he designed the costumes and worked out the details of the scenery and acting. The first performance was given in the Royal presence, with Captain Frederick Guest as Charles II and Aubrey Herbert as the Duke of York. Among the performers representing Monk's regiment was a detachment of Coldstream Guards, the direct descendants of Monk's men. It had been arranged that the enthusiastic citizens should break the line to surround their king until the Coldstream colour-sergeant suddenly interrupted with, "Monk's regiment, did you say, sir? But that's us." "Yes," replied Mark. "Well, that will never do, sir. Our line was never broken in peace or war." Hastily the scheme was changed, and the men at that point were changed to the "London Trained Band," or Territorials of that time, and the same performers in other uniforms contentedly suffered the irruption of the loyal mob.

It was typical of Mark that he modelled the bust of Cromwell, needed in the first scene, with the same extemporary skill with which he once designed a theatre poster at Cambridge or modelled a gargoyle for Sledmere. He had the instant power to adapt the material under hand to his ideas. In the Catholic church at Pickering he once noticed the stains on the copper statue of St. Peter, and immediately said, "I would blacklead it," which was done, with excellent results. Another brilliant stroke was his adaptation of the woollen Balaclava cap to a likeness of the old chain mail on the memorial bronzes at Sledmere.

In 1914 Mark and Sandars collaborated for the last time at the Tournament. The pageant this year was the close of the Roman occupation of Britain. The scenes portrayed the triumph of the Emperor Claudius, in which slaves bore a model of Stonehenge, the life and drill of the legionaries on the Great Wall of Hadrian from Tyne to Solway, and the last Roman eagle and centurion going down before the barbarian from the North. To perfect the realism carrobalistas, which could throw heavy weights, were successfully made by the carpenters at Sledmere, and oxen were transported from the Wolds to accompany the British Druids. "The beasts want to be fat," wrote Mark, "white, sleek, with large horns, and to look as bully as possible." The words of command were given in

Latin, and were taken from Claudius Ælianus's drill-book written for the Emperor Hadrian (*De aciebus instruendis*); for instance, right and left turn were *ad hastam declina* and *ad scutum declina*. Mark observed that soldiers, unlike other actors, gave a finer performance on each successive night, while the fighting on the final Saturday (pay day) was so realistic that though bundles of bludgeons were rescued from the men just before the performance, there were several minor casualties. At one rehearsal the assaulting barbarians were refreshed with English ale, with the result that when they reached the wall it crumbled and brought down Mark in its collapse. These performances were the soul of the Military Tournaments, for Mark had an element of the successful producer as well as of the actor in him.

Mark's interest in military hobbies never ceased. He appealed to his farmers to help him raise a squadron of Yeomanry, lectured to the villagers on an imaginary landing in Filey Bay, presented them with a rifle range, invented "landscape targets," superintended a midnight defence of Burdale Tunnel from scouts and bomb-throwers, manœuvred the Fifth Yorkshire Regiment on the Sledmore estate, and pointed out that the postilion-wagoners of the Wolds would make military drivers ("an immense supply of this ideal transport exists on the farms"). He gave prizes for good shooting and good horses. "Picture a raw, underbred pony with a patchy, unkempt, scurvy coat, with miserable drooping quarters, a back like a fret-saw, an eye like a pig, a nose like a cart horse and a neck like a mule. They called these Argentines, and I wonder how many brave men met their death on them." We find the late General Cowans writing (January 26, 1911): "How interested I was in your drivers' performances. Everything was so practical, and discloses a great reserve of drivers of which I had no knowledge before. Your miniature range, too, was quite excellent. If we had as many keen men as you there would be no doubts as to the success of the Territorials." The War Office, after immense worrying, eventually paid £1 a head to the wagoners as a special reserve. Cowans wrote: "We can take on 1,000 worth; i.e. 1,000 at £1, as you suggested. How about 18s. and a badge?" It needed war to justify Mark's prescience. He conducted a forced march of Territorials from Sledmere to Richmond, covering 65 miles in 31 hours and 10 minutes. The men numbered 35, carrying 28 pounds each. (July 7, 1910.)

Left Sledmere, 7 p.m.
Eddlethorpe, 3.20 a.m.
Londonderry, slept 12 to 7.40 p.m.
Reached Richmond, 12 a.m.

"God is not on the side of the great battalions with sore feet," quoth Mark, as a result of his experience. In November he led a forced march from Doncaster to Scarborough, 79 miles, in 44 hours and 22 minutes.

Left Doncaster, 8.30 p.m.
Selby, 3 a.m.
Escrick, 5 a.m.

Left York, 2 p.m.
Malton, 9 p.m.
Scarborough, 4.52 p.m.

On arrival they carried out a sham fight to test the men's capacity to enter the firing line after performing such a march.

To the Territorials Mark devoted himself specially. With the need for them and with their wants his speeches continually rang. When the scheme was mooted in 1907 he said: "There is one solution to avoid conscription. Instead of training our auxiliaries in time of war, as Mr. Haldane proposes, we should train them in time of peace." When two men were dismissed from situations for joining the Territorials, his fury knew no bounds "that we will not even allow the poorest to do our duty!"

He foresaw danger everywhere and often in picturesque terms: "We have no home army, we hold Egypt and the Soudan with microscopic garrisons. We have hostages in Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Aden and Hong Kong. We have a huge, twinkling, glittering Empire in India, an isolated division locked up in South Africa." And speaking in the House (July 30, 1913): "The regulations of the *Titanic* would not admit a case of measles on board for fear of an outbreak, and the most scrupulous care was taken against such minor probabilities; but against the major possibility of running into an iceberg only ordinary precautions were taken, the result being the humiliating tragedy with which everyone is familiar.

The same with the British Army. Defence is left absolutely to chance. I submit that it is very difficult to get the whole of the public to take seriously this danger of invasion. It is like the doctrine of eternal punishment. Some believe in it and some do not, but prudent people take precautions to avoid it."

Again: "An armament without a policy is a direct incentive to war; a policy without an armament is a piece of waste paper," declared Mark, and as far back as 1910 he called for the master hand of Kitchener to organize Lord Haldane's "paper dragon." His enthusiasm for the Territorial Army received a compliment from Lord Haldane, who, though politically an enemy, realized that "such enthusiasm should go far towards overcoming any apathy."

The following is one of his flashing letters to Aubrey Herbert bearing on military subjects:

> *Re defence.* Here are some chestnuts of mine. The army used to be composed of ploughboys and country gentlemen. Cobden destroyed the first and Lloyd George is destroying the second. Borstal has skimmed the cream of the jails, so you have no reserves. Here is an axiom: You must not conscript the upper classes because this will frighten labour. Labour will say: "This is a *bourgeois Garde Nationale.*" You cannot have a proper mercenary army. Therefore it must be long service to be any good, and modern weapons destroy so many men that you must compromise between quality and quantity. Moreover, Rome and the Commonwealth show that real first-class mercenary armies must be very small. I therefore assume there can be no ideal British Territorial Force. Our scheme has been a fine little army, a bad militia, a horde of untrained men. Haldane's scheme has produced a fair little army and a mixture of a worse militia and a depleted horde. . . . Don't

you dare talk to me about vivisection. I am the happier for the sufferings of twenty rabbits. Abdul Hamid got a Pasteur Institute in 1888. India, owing to the efforts of our dear Dumb Brothers' Phonograph, was kept without one until 1899, during which time some whites and blacks had to live in a hell of uncertainty and terror for eight or nine months and some had unnecessarily to die a hideous, foul, ignominious death which lasts for five days. Walter Long stopped his ears and muzzled and slew dear doggies till he extirpated this plague, and he lost votes. *Es seli wa salaam alai alf alf mar ra.*

Here is a piece of poetry you may put into verse: My mare was maimed by a clumsy clown; he pierced her frog with a cruel nail. Yet she skimmed the waste like wind-blown down, and mocked the speed of the scared gazelle. And now, having delighted and enraged you, adieu!

CHAPTER VIII

THE EAST AGAIN

THE first fruits of Mark's Eastern travels were reaped in a lecture (March 11, 1907) before the Royal Geographical Society on the Jazirah, that district which, since Vasco da Gama abolished the overland route, ceased to be the border-line between East and West and became that between North and South.

Of the Jazirah as he beheld it, a pen-picture ("The Jazirah in March, 1906") was to appear in his *magnum opus*, "The Caliph's Last Heritage." It is worth quoting: "The lands of the Jazirah, indeed, differ from any other rolling stretches of country I have ever seen, and bear not the faintest resemblance to either the Texan or Mexican plains or the South African veldt. The atmosphere, which is at once clear and hazy, produces a very curious illusion; a stone eight hundred yards away appears to be close at hand, while a mountain on the horizon which is not more than six miles away appears to be treble the distance. The two effects combined give an impression of a vastness and space that it is difficult to describe in words. The sky, which in spring is often cloudy and overcast, throws strange streaky shadows over the landscape, and a dull indefinite line of grey on the horizon will change suddenly to a clear bright ridge of yellow hills, which is equally quickly transmuted to a dark, forbidding range of purple mountains; the rolling steppes run in lines of grey and green, thus marking the good grazing ground from the stony tracts. On the sky-line herds of camels move almost imperceptibly to and fro, cropping the grass, while on the hill-sides dappled flocks of sheep speckle the country with splashes of black and brown and yellow. The larks while in the air sing cheerily. Now and again a rare thunderstorm comes rushing across the land, a dark curtain of black from which the huge falling drops smite the dusty ground, the hills and distant plains vanish, the horizon closes in, the ground turns yellow and red, the yellow lightning sends an unearthly sheen upon the grass, and for ten minutes we are in a strange unknown world of rushing waters, roaring wind and rolling thunder. The storm passes over, the camels and sheep begin to move again, the larks are once more in voice, and, save for a little brightness in the sky, the desert is as it was before."

In his lecture Mark very modestly set forth his work. " At Tel-el-Hamam I discovered the ruins of Kelet Maslamah not a mile below from the place Mr. Guy le Strange marked it on his map from the written word of the Oriental geographers." He also found the ruins of a city where Mr. le Strange wrote the blessed word Bajerwan. Taking modern conditions, he explained the defeat of Crassus in this manner: " How is it that during the winter the

Romans could occupy such castles as they wished, and that just as the pasture sprang up in spring a huge army of cavalry congregated, except by the fact that the shepherds deserted the middle plains in the winter and returned in spring, as they do to this day?"

Mark's most important discovery was of some unknown Kurds, whom he added to his unique catalogue of such peoples. Kurdish chiefs he found very similar to the old knight in Kipling's "Puck of Pook's Hill." His account of the military code might have saved many lives had it been adopted in the West. "The rules of war in the Jazirah are as strictly and decently observed among Arabs as by the white and red knights in 'Alice in Wonderland.' To kill is discreditable and savage; to wound slightly is what is aimed at. To surrender is not discreditable. Camps are out of bounds."

Of the devil-worshippers whom he met, he recorded: "Their features are so small and pinched that their faces have an appearance almost ape-like. Their expression is predatory and vindictive. The fact that their noses are generally neither straight nor hooked, but pointed and turned downward so as to press down on the upper lip, adds to the unpleasantness of their countenances. Their voices are shrill and fierce, their manners brusque and unceremonious, their bodies are lithe, active and wiry, and in stature they tend to be above the average. Their clothing is strange in the extreme. On the head a tall, brown, conical cap, around which is wound a black or red turban; the body is swathed in a long flowing skirt of white, cut square at the neck; a short cloak of brown leather and pointed curled-over shoes complete the costume."

While writing his book he took counsel with the invaluable Professor Browne, to judge from letters:

February 25, 1907.

I am also writing hard. The last six months of 1905 I devoted to history of Turkey in Asia or area now included therein. I got on fairly comfortably from the battle of Issus to the victory of Heraklius over the Persians. Now the awful period has begun, good-bye Gibbon, Tacitus, friends of my youth, and here you find me quite comfortable about the prophet and Omar and Abu Bek'r and the Greeks, and the Khazars and Avaros. But why did the later Khalifs have Turkish Guards? Who converted the Turks to Al Islam and when? And which Turks?"

March 5, 1907.

Damn those Turks; they are perfectly appalling and yet so important. I am coming to the belief that the Turk as such is a myth. I have a notion that even the pre-Mongolian princes were well mixed with the Kurds, Arabs and other locals. Edhem Pasha, the conqueror of Thessaly, confided to me his belief that there were not above 700 men of Turkish descent in the male line in Constantinople.

August 30, 1907.

My final work will be three vols., No. 1 of general history, No. 2 personal narration of travels, No. 3 about five essays on geography—military resources, civil service, religious and racial characteristics—and a forecast including Baghdad Railway, art, wealth, etc. The object is to produce a book I have always wanted myself. The R.G.S. is going to publish my list of tribes very soon.

October 2, 1907.

I am going to have a bang at that ridiculous Treaty in November. For once the Imperialist and the Little

Englander can stand side by side in the face of such overwhelming folly. The Persian capital and the richest Persian provinces have been handed over body and soul to the unscrupulous bureaucracy of Russia. The slump in Korean forests is to be counterbalanced in the exploitation of the mineral wealth, the agricultural wealth, the transit wealth, and the taxable wealth of north and west Iran, another slice of the human race is to be sludged under the worst government in the world, no matter what happens in the future, for to be governed by Moscow officials is perhaps a degree better than to be governed by Moscow peasants and professors. We English are to have free play in the inaccessible mountains of the Hindu Kush, the empty deserts of Central Persia, and the grilling and pestiferous shores of the Persian Gulf. Was there ever such insanity from a commercial point of view? Was there ever such villainy from a human point of view? Was there ever such a crime from a historical point of view? The only real Eastern question is the Baghdad Railway and that of German naval power in Eastern waters or British naval power. Basra and Mosul are the important points, yet neither Germany nor Turkey is mentioned in the damnable bit of waste paper that Grey and his colleagues have evolved in company with a discredited, corrupt gang of official Huns. Curse their flat caps, their whiskers and their vodka breath!

December 3, 1907.

Many thanks for your article, which is intensely interesting. Only I wish you had not mentioned Denshawi. That was a real blot on English administration, and earned for us the jeers and laughter of all Western Asia. It was the most infernal folly to hang the murderers, because it is the headsman who is responsible, not the fellah. Omdehs who are ill in bed when English officers are murdered by black men must or ought to take the consequences. Personally the only English Imperialists in the East I admire are men like Clive, Nicholson, Burton, Napier and Gordon, because they can manage the East without worrying it. It is an extraordinary fact that the consuls in Turkey who keep order are the few military consuls because they can ride, shoot and give an order and never bother natives about cant and nonsense such as rights of man. Consequently the natives look upon them as proper and respectable persons. *Beni-Adam* and not *Beni-Kitab*.

Serious as Mark's literary endeavour was to be, the clash of East and West perpetually caused comic flashes in his letters or books. He did record in a book the marauding old sheikh whom he found sheltering under the red corrugated iron roof of his castle, and who solemnly questioned him whether it was safe to invest money in the Charing Cross Bank! But only the Sledmere tradition records the visit of the faithful Jacob to Yorkshire and his appearance in the shooting-field. At the sight of a hare he rushed forward with the yell of the primitive Nimrod brandishing his gun. Once he swung his barrels across the line at some flying partridges and fired. Mark and Sandars lay down. Jacob was then seen guarding himself prophylactically with lifted gun from a stolid farmer whom he had nearly shot down with his first barrel! To Mark's expostulations he explained that in his country the farmer would have returned fire. He had covered him by way of precaution!

While in Constantinople Mark became acquainted with the brother-in-law of the Sultan, who, it appears, was fond of farming and afterwards visited Sledmere. Mr. Cholmondeley was surprised one day to receive a telegram from Stamboul: "Send Rum in case." He obeyed, being quite unable to guess that originally the telegram read, "Send Ram in crate," a present Mark had devised for the Sublime Porte. In acknowledging the unexpected arrival of grog Mark said "you could have heard the laughter across the Bosphorus."

The "Caliph's Last Heritage" did not appear till 1915, but it appeared at a decisive time in Turkish history—after the Turk had thrown his crooked sword into the scale against the England and the France who had battled for him in the Crimea. It received a great deal of important criticism. "As far as any Englishman can plumb the depths of the Oriental mind and imagination, he has done so," wrote Sir Thomas Holdich in *Land and Water*. In the *Saturday Review* Sidney Whitman wrote: "Few living Englishmen can have had such varied first hand experience of the Turkish Empire, and few can be better qualified to answer that endlessly repeated question, 'What is to become of the Turk?' For Mark Sykes the Turk can continue quite independently of his European capital. The Turk, in his opinion, with the capture of Stamboul let slip a treasure and gained a pestilence. For the art of Byzantium evaded his leaden touch, and he was never more turned from Europe than when he became ensconced in the heart of its old culture." Lord Cromer wrote in the *Spectator*: "The most instructive portion of Sir Mark Sykes's book is that in which he tells us of the results which accrued from the downfall of the late Sultan. Sir Mark confirms the testimony of all other competent witnesses. The Young Turk has proved a complete failure. To those who sympathize with all that is best in the East and who would be glad to see the reasonable national aspirations of

Easterns realized, the picture drawn by Sir Mark Sykes is not on the whole calculated to mitigate their present despondency." Mr. H. M. Hyndman wrote: "Sir Mark Sykes has evidently something of the same sympathy with Mohammedanism and its votaries which influenced such widely different men as David Urquhart, Sir Richard Burton, Lord Stanley of Alderley (who died in the odour of Moslem sanctity) and Mr. Wilfrid Blunt." Sir Edward Pears wrote in the *English Historical Review* of "the observations of a keen though not unprejudiced traveller." Mr. D. S. Margoliouth noted in the *Moslem World* that "his style appears to be modelled on that of Mr. Boythorne, of 'Bleak House,' his favourite degree is the speculative superlative," and he pointed out two paradoxes. While Mark was full of contempt for European grafting on Oriental cultures, he was sufficiently pleased with the Turks to wish them "a good wholesome English public school." Again, he found Mosul such a sink of iniquity that he advised any new railway to avoid it, but one hundred pages later he was sketching a new track between Mardin, Shedade and Mosul.

His book is a quarry to a biographer, for in its writing he indulged every vein and crystallized every experience. He examined the Eastern bend of the Euphrates and met the *mollah* Hajji Diab, who remains otherwise unrecorded, "a strange old body with a pale blue head-cloth with a white rag twisted round it to show his learning, an inkhorn in his waist-cloth, a beard on one side of his face and none on the other, a broken nose, a ragged coat, and four wives in four wicker cages!"

Here is a picture at sunset: "The camels roar and growl their spring love-songs, the hundreds of baaing lambs scurry into camp, the white limestone hills are patched with green; the greater stars glisten in the sky; the west is blood-red, but a thin strip of mackerel cloud bars the east; the lights shine in the low black tents, and the sweet camel-thorn smoke blows gently and low through the cold air. Far away the river runs between its bushy banks, broad, deep and still."

Outside a great Saracenic castle he noted the tomb of the brigand chief who built it. "The tomb is a storehouse for absentees' belongings. How strange that the robber's grave should be a refuge from thieves!" Of Kurnub, on the way to Petra, he gave a ghastly picture: "To leave Kurnub in a southerly direction is to enter the true, fearful, terrible and frightful desert, the desert of huge mountains, of blinding red and white stones, the desert of thick, impenetrable atmosphere, of deathly trees, withered, shrivelled, blasted and stunted, of jagged rocks, mushroom-topped mounds, vast, burning, arid water-courses, of scanty, acrid wells and unending ranges of uncharted hills. Men lived here once, but they are dead, dead as the withered grass, dead as the blazing pebbles, dead as the grim red rocks, dead as the scoured empty channels scooped in those dead hills and highlands."

The impression made on Mark was summed up in his vivid phrase: "Some day when the world dies its corpse will be like this." A phrase which recalls the Welsh bard who, in his effort to describe the lonely majesty of a cliff hanging over the sea, simply compared it to the tombstone of the sea! But his effect was ridiculous in describing the Bait Mal at Petra as "a hock bottle, on the apex of which is a debased Ionic capital supporting a pineapple."

Here are the slums of Damascus: "There are quiet, empty, narrow streets where curs sleep on heaps of offal and puppies stagger to and fro; where overhanging casement windows crane over the roadway till they almost meet, so that the light of day shines only through a tiny crevice; where mysterious arches spring out of dead walls, and the road is blocked by buttresses supporting tottering buildings, and where a clear sun in a bright blue sky above shines down on dirty timbers and yellow walls."

While at Brusa, in Anatolia, he found and sketched "a rose-red city half as old as time." The old Ottoman capital under Mount Olympus comes to life under his pen, a life that the automatic click of the Kodak can never give. We see "the chequered buildings, the dark-tiled roofs, the noble domes, distinguished in pleasant contrast by the stately cypress trees, which spread their sombre gloom around each open space within the town. Huge stubborn masses of Roman masonry jut out among the modern houses, above which tower the tender spires of the graceful minarets, while on the outskirts gleam the snowy mosques and tombs where lie the ancient chiefs and leaders of the greatest of the Turkish clans. It would be hard to say whether Brusa appeals more strongly to the artist, the historian, the antiquary; much of the charm of the ancient city lies in its atmosphere of peace and rest; her colours of brown and white and red are subdued by age. At Brusa lies the greatest of the Osmanli Sultans, borne thither from the bloody field of Kossovo, and to Brusa come the Moslem emigrants from the lost provinces of Europe like tired pigeons wearied with the storm beating back to home."

Mark was never truer than in his grossest exaggerations, as all who have had to do with Turkish ships will recognize in the following skit: "On Turkish steamers all natural laws are permanently suspended. A Turkish steamer can proceed with engines which no ship chandler could accept as scrap iron. A Turkish steamer can go out to sea with a starboard list of eighteen degrees and survive. A Turkish steamer can still continue to ply though she may not have been overhauled since she was cast aside as useless by her European owners in the year 1884. On Turkish steamers there is no reason why the chart should not be used as a tablecloth for the captain's dinner."

At Taushanli he made a graphic comparison between the old and new Turkey. He found there a library full of manuscripts, glossaries, Korans and geographies. "Of course, it is the old learning, the learning of the Middle Ages. It has neither beginning nor end; it has no connexion with material things, and it has nothing to do with making money or teaching people how to make money." From Taushanli to Kutahia he observed an expensive modern road whose first section was in ruins before the last was finished. "Here was the new learning. Surely it was better to sit in a library and learn about great kings and travellers, of mighty empires and their rise and fall, to wear a turban and look wise and clever, than to get a degree in a Continental school of engineering and on the score of progress, but really in a fit of childish vanity, perform such an act of colossal folly as this."

He prophesied the doom of the new Turk and of the new learning elsewhere: "O most liberal and sanguine young Turks, that palace, I fear me, will defeat you! It has survived worse enemies than you; it crushed Belisarius, it defeated the mob of Constantinople in the days of Theodora, it throttled the Crusaders, it enslaved the warrior chiefs of your royal house, it slew your prophet Midhat. It yields to you as it yielded to Julian, to Leo the Isaurian, to Sulayman the Magnificent, to Mahmud the Reformer, and it will ruin you." ("Five Mansions of Othman.")

Camping on the pestilential coast of Mersina, he found the sunrise some compensation for the insects. "It was after a troubled night that I awoke at dawn to see the most wonderful sight; a fiery, bloody flush suffused the eastern horizon in a long, low, narrow band. This sharp line was broken by two dark silhouettes of the Syrian peaks one hundred miles away. This broken band of red separated a purple starlit sky, wherein just without the verge of red there lay a waning crescent, from an incredible stripe of violet copper-green, rippling in long hard lines, breaking in restless, razor-edged waves upon a third stripe of chocolate beach. This singular glory, or shall I say manifestation?—for it had in it something of terror and ill-omen, something beyond Nature—lasted not above fifteen minutes."

Mark studied the history as well as the geography of Asia Minor, which seemed to him to be the most interesting country in the world. "Here is a land of contrasts, climates, barriers and diverse physical circumstances. It has been the birthplace of civilization, has given the world the Gospel and the Koran, has seen the rise and decline of four great Empires and scores of principalities and dynasties. It has been the battle-ground of all the philosophies and creeds which form the basis of those now occupying western minds, as well as the highway of all conquerors from Xerxes to Napoleon. There is nothing in our private or public life to-day which is not directly or indirectly influenced by some human movement that took place in this zone."

Though he wrote his history in jerks, gaps and fits, he covered the ground, Rome, Parthia, Persia, and Mohammed, "the fatal Ishmaelite." He found the clue to much amalgamation. "If a barbarous people conquer a civilized people slowly, they themselves become insensibly civilized in the process." He was fond of comparisons across the centuries. He compared the culture-absorbing, nomadic Parthians after their descent upon civilization to American western millionaires, and the colonnades at Palmyra to the Hotel Cecil, "and save that the latter is built of iron daubed with sham wood, sham stucco, sham gold, the effect is identical." Medina under Omar he imagined to be not unlike the mud village of Omdurman. The rise of Mohammedanism thrilled his pen. "The world was jolted out of its course by the genius of Mohammed." While he sometimes skipped (for instance) "the centuries of snarling and squabbling which preceded the birth of Mohammed," he would rake his mind to find a right word. To describe the Meccan expedition against Mohammed, he added as a note, "gang is too small, horde too terrible, mass too untruthful, procession too ridiculous, rabble too contemptuous!" His view of Semitic civilizations was that they resembled the seeds in the desert. "In midsummer the scorching rocks are bare, the valleys are desolate; a few days of spring rains, and the whole land is ablaze with a thousand flowers whose scent makes the air faint, and the valleys are thick with lush-green grass; yet again in a few weeks the flowers are but dust, and the pasture withered to a few whispering patches of dead rushes."

The year 1908 found him on a Mediterranean steamer describing the celebrities of the ship.

> Hall Caine has taken to a cap instead of his sombrero; he looks rather like Keir Hardie. We have another celebrated person on board (uncover and kneel as you read the name) in the shape of Sir Ernest Cassel. I wonder when he will be made a peer. A lot more passengers got on at Naples of the same kind, except that they included a refined party of Germans whose manners at table exceed belief.

I saw one old Frau eat her ice out of a wine-glass by licking it with her tongue, and a professor who talked with his mouth full of cabbage and gesticulated with his fork upon which were pieces of food. There is also an exquisite Englishman just joined us; he must be a pork butcher's son with artistic leanings.

Extracts follow from letters written to his wife in 1908:

HAMA.
January 25, 1908.

I have arrived here at last—after a multitude of adventures. When we got to Jaffa a fearful sea was running, no going ashore or anything else; waited a day rolling at anchor. How ill you would have been! Then Beyrut 6 P.M. yesterday, dinning, yelling and screaming. Then up goes the yellow flag and enter the *Dowlah* in the shape of a medical officer, whose business it was to "constate" how many cases of plague we had on board. Panic among the deck passengers and fury of the Italian captain. In half an hour, everyone having given false names, addresses and religions, the ship was declared clean and we went ashore. My "messenger's passport" was subjected to an eagle scrutiny and finally confiscated. Left Beyrut for Hama at once. All night in train; bitterly cold on the Lebanon, where there was deep snow; at last reached Hama at ten-thirty this morning. It was rather jolly to be in a Serail again, for was not everything as it should be? A 20-stone mutesarif, a Cretan who could only talk Greek, was engaged in doing justice—the Greek bishop had a complaint. The case could only have happened in Hama. Behold! Once two Greeks lived in adjoining houses even as brothers; one, finding business bad, said to his friend: "Lo! I go to America for five years; watch over my house," and the man departed, leaving his friend in charge of his house. Five years passed and the absentee returned, but, behold! his friend had in his absence knocked a hole in the dividing wall which separated the two houses, and having established his rights of ownership by paying house-tax on both for two years had sold them, and even departed himself to America with the money! The mutesarif looked rather puzzled, and I could not help him with any suggestion.

Mark's Eastern travels brought him in contact with statesmen to whom he was glad to make known his findings. He wrote to Sir Edward Grey:

August 14, 1907.

As I see that there is some little trouble on the Persian-Turkish frontier, I venture to forward to you the complete list of Kurdish tribes I have compiled from my notes during my last journey. If you send to the R.G. Society, they will provide you with the map of which the enclosed is a key. I think that the list will afford considerable assistance in making out the true meaning of information emanating from native sources.

November 12, 1908.

I have the honour to request that you will lay this, my application to visit the City of Sanaa in Yemen, before the British Ambassador at Constantinople, and venture to hope that he will obtain permission from the Ottoman Government for me to visit the city. The reason that impels me to make this application is that I have in preparation a work on the Ottoman Empire, and before I can complete it I must visit the town and its surrounding district.

To Kitchener he wrote:

April 5, 1910.

I venture to send you the photographs of Kastamuni and the environs which you said you would like to see. The prints are made by a special process, and can be exposed to the light without danger of fading. As far as I know only two Englishmen visited the place between the time you left and my visit in 1906-7. It was at Kastamuni that the first signs of the Constitutional movement took place, about twelve months before the Constitution was proclaimed. In the mosque of Sultan Iskandiur is preserved a very fine brass reliquary of French make of about the thirteenth century, probably captured during the last crusade. The Rufai Dervishes had greatly improved since your time, and were very enlightened and hospitable.

A trip into Egypt gave him a sudden enthusiasm for Lord Cromer. In answer to Stead's attacks Mark wrote in the *Saturday Review* (March 28, 1908): "Lord Cromer is a big, solid, definite Englishman. That he spoke no Arabic and understood neither Arab nor fellah were probably the secrets of his success. A strong, dominant figure, dreaded by the inferior race whom he knew not and who knew not him. He was the Dowlah. . . . To-day in Egypt there are no whips or corvées. The fellah wears a ring on finger and travels by rail. The frankified, dandified effendis drive in buggies with Englishwomen (cover your faces, O daughters of shame). If he desire it, an English poet may dress up as a Moslem Sheikh and instigate slaves to rebellion, the turbaned trash of Cairo may spit upon hats in the street saying, 'Curse your religion, O Kaffir!' and yet the redcoats kill none, the land bursts with riches and Philae temple lies buried in the waters of the Nile. By God's will this wonderful Egypt, half vision and half nightmare, is the work of Cromer, who knew not Gordon nor yet native public opinion."

It was Mark's ambition to become an interpreter between his fellow-countrymen and the East. No Englishman except himself could have written thus to *The Times* on the situation at Diarbekir (December 3, 1907): "The disquiet which prevails at Diarbekir has nothing in common with the troubles at

Erzerum and elsewhere, and the Kurdish cavalry of Ibrahim bear no resemblance to the Haideranli Hamidieh of Hamid Pasha of Van." He certainly gave a new conception of the Turk. "Both the Unspeakable Turk and the Dear Old Turk are phantoms of the imagination. Mr. Gladstone and the missionaries made one, Mr. Creasy and the Crimean officers the other." His definition of the Turk was "a Moslem whose native language is Turkish." On the country itself he advised Englishmen briefly: "Turkey is no go except for a financier or a canal engineer of remarkable capacity. The country is overstocked with incompetent, underpaid officials. Englishmen would be well advised not to go unless they are prepared to be chucked at a moment's notice, to have their salaries six months in arrear, and to bow their necks to Oriental masters. Turks are delightful hosts, but I should not fancy them as employers."

Hints for travelling in the East appeared in a letter to Mr. H. P. Gordon, of the British School at Athens:

December 10, 1907.

I used to make no secret of what I was doing and used to photograph everybody and everything, sketch the roads on a cavalry sketching-case, take altitudes and bearings, use Turkish soldiers to mark base lines, and never was prevented, though I believe the Sublime Porte once said I was mapping the whole country. However, there are things to avoid. Never sketch metalled roads, never approach any building where Government property is kept, such as ammunition, tents, guns, or rifles. Never ask permission to enter these places. Never sketch near the coast. Never sketch on Crown lands, called "*Chiftlik*." Never let your sketching materials or implements be seen at the Custom House. Always stop sketching when approaching a large city. Never mention your business, or ask permission to sketch from the governor of a province or any of his satellites. Never go anywhere without a policeman (zaptieh). Those are the things not to do. Now here are the things to observe: Always make a visit to the Mudir, Kaimakan, Mutesarif, or chief official of the place in which you happen to be, then call on the commander of the military, then go to your tent and await their return visit (note, always send a messenger "*Khaba*" before calling), give your visitors coffee, take their photographs, talk about international politics, talk about local agriculture, show them your picture-book if you have any, ask for a local policeman to show you round. They will then report that an English spy travelled in their district and that they kept him under close observation. Always tip your policeman handsomely; two francs a day for one is not excessive, for he will do a great deal of work for you. Avoid the local Christian priest unless accompanied by an officer of the Government. This saves a great deal of trouble unless you are engaged on political work. If you ask the local priest to dinner, ask a Government official as well. This is in the priest's interest. The farther you go East, the more complacent the authorities become. Now as to your business, you will find more difficulty in Syria than in Mesopotamia, so I should advise you to go to the Euphrates first. When you get to Syria, if you are interfered with you can say: "But I did all this in Mesopotamia, how ridiculous to prevent me here!" And from what I know of Turkish officials this has an effect, because someone else is committed, and then it doesn't matter. An intelligent and reliable servant is essential; beware of anyone who has been educated by American missionaries. They always rub officials up the wrong way. If you have the choice between a rather dull and heavy man and a chattering and loquacious one, select the former. A talkative and insolent Syrian Dragoman may wreck the fairest prospects. Greeks always get on very ill with Arabs owing to their boastfulness and superior ways. Jerusalem men are the best, and above all insist on *Moslem* muleteers.

He gave General Baden-Powell some notes for his Boy and Girl Scouts:

December 28, 1911.

If a man is a poet, he has the right of entry everywhere and can receive a meal in return for poetry. The poetry must be serious; if it is comic he is a hireling. I wonder if this could be introduced among the boys? There must be some poets among them. The rule is simple: the verse must not have more than four lines. It must celebrate a deed of valour, or a lament or a state of mind. It must *never* be *written.* A poet would have a badge. The poem must be acclaimed to entitle the poet to a badge. A sample poem is the following, translated by Sir Richard Burton:

Dark and the Desert and Destriers me ken,
The Glaive, and the Joust, and Paper and Pen.

That is, I have known the silence of the desert, I have known the darkness of the night, I have known the joy of riding and its pride, I have known the pride and joy of battle, I have known the pleasure of good company, entertaining, and hospitality, I have known the pleasure of being able to set my thoughts on paper, I have experienced all noble things, therefore am I ready to die, for all things worth doing have I done. Asylum may be claimed by touching the tent rope—the man, even an enemy, is then sacred as a guest. Another special rule, in battle surrender must always be accepted. It is not looked upon by a Bedawin warrior as a good thing to have *killed* many men; it is no matter of boasting but rather of regret. Surrender is shown by pulling off the head-dress—i.e. ropes and handkerchiefs. Kurds always unroll their sleeves before attacking. To approach with sleeves rolled up shows peace, to come with sleeves rolled down war. The Hamawand Kurds are the noblest. Here is a story for Girl Scouts. Once the Hamawand men were away on a raid, and the Jaffs came down to take their sheep. Twelve Hamawand girls got on their fathers' mares and pursued the robbers; they caught ten, and killed nine, sparing one, whom they shaved—beard, eyebrows, head—took his clothes and gave him a woman's dress, and told him to go to the chiefs of the Jaffs to tell them what the Hamawand girls could do, let alone the men.

Concerning the poets and dervishes of the desert Mark gave information to his old chief, George Wyndham:

March 25, 1908.

Among other strollers of the desert we find four distinct kinds of religious order: firstly, mystics from all parts of the earth, wandering in search of light, taking no money and following their own inclinations; secondly, holy men who are usually orthodox Sunnis and write letters, compose religious texts and prayers, read the Koran, give legal advice, or conduct prayers in the orthodox fashion; thirdly, simpletons or madmen, who are reverenced on account of their infirmity; such fellows will be allowed any amount of licence for their behaviour whether natural or assumed, see Edgar in *King Lear;* fourthly, Dervishes; these are professional devotees generally of the Kadiri order, and appear singly or occasionally a party of two or three, they conduct prayer, breathe on sick children or barren women, repeat a number of prayers for a consideration, and go through their own particular form of prayer or self-torture. This consists sometimes of running daggers through the cheeks or loose skin of the stomach. Others flog themselves with chains or sticks, or swallow red-hot charcoal. Generally speaking the pipe music has to play for some time before they can work up to the business. All these persons are supposed to possess supernatural powers, and places are shown where they have fasted or leaped from great heights without hurt. Further, it is supposed that they can on occasion transform themselves into gazelles to pass the waterless deserts, or cross rivers on their outstretched prayer-rugs. They are also imagined capable of preparing charms against sickness, and casting spells over shackles for hobbling mares of such power that if a thief come in the night and lay hands on the shackles he cannot leave go and becomes incapable of movement. Note with care, this is all supposed to be done by God's power and not through the Dervishes' faith or merit.

October 9, 1910.

In North Mesopotamia before "the constitution" came there were three kinds of people who gave entertainment and were "*Aman*"—i.e., not subject to robbery or plunder. (*A*) Poets of good family who went from tent to tent and tribe to tribe, and extemporized quatrains in honour of chiefs and persons of rank, pashas and notables. They really have a stock of these verses, but always make a pretence of extemporization to the sound of a horsehair fiddle. They strike a note on the fiddle and keep the note up as long as they are stuck for a word, then break into a little cadence when they have made up the line. Thus: "He-e-cried—he-cried—he cried—he cried—he cried—my tribe is scattered. He—cried—he cried—he cried—he cried—he cried—my tribe is scattered—the foe my head hath battered. Dust in my face is spattered, yet none have I flattered!" Such as I have known never will allow that they can "remember" their compositions, and always make this "inspiration prelude." They are rather shy, and when given money take it and go without a word. They are always very discreet as to the rights and wrongs of tribal wars, and never talk politics or take sides. One poet gave me two sets of verses, one he had composed on the death of El Hadhi, the other in honour of the Shaykh whose men killed El Hadhi. Note these are people of good family but very poor as a rule, generally the sons of poets. (*B*) The next class of entertainers are Dervishes of the various orders and independent holy men, who give exhibitions of torture and "*Zikr*"—i.e., prayers. They breathe on sick children, bless evil-eye beads for horses, and read the Koran; they often do secretarial work for Shaykhs. (*C*) Gipsies—known as Gupti, Nowar, Howek, Zinv, Zingari or Jingala. These people always try to conceal their real estate by saying they are Kurds, but never deny the truth when asked direct. They generally travel in a party of four—two men, a woman and a boy! A donkey, some ropes, a drum and a pair of pipes are their stock-in-trade: the man beats the drum and plays the pipes, the boy dances on a slack rope, does contortionist business; one of the men does the clown, the other man plays the instruments and sings love songs; the woman postures and dances. The women have good figures and are very graceful and keep young. I could never make out whether they were prostitutes or no, but doubt it, as I have never seen syphilitic men among the gypsies. The Singala, as far as I know, steal the poetry of the people mentioned under Class A, but do not use the fiddle—at least, I have never seen one used by them. Note: Love would never be the subject of Class A's poetry except cases of some great beauty, an elopement, or a respectable love affair.

In February, 1911, he reached the westward bounds of the Moslem in Africa. Visiting Tunis and Kairouan, he left for Tebessa, in Algeria, on muleback, 250 miles thence to Oran. He crossed the Mediterranean to Cartagena and made his way home through Spain and Portugal.

His letters to his wife were full of sketches. For example: TUNIS. . . . "There is no cholera, nor has been for ages—Tunis is not a pleasant place—the Tunisian is I think a HASHASH by profession, here are some (sketches). There are also Jewesses thus (sketch) and Moslims (sketch). There are Nostalgic French soldiers thus (sketch) (various sketches). A French general has just come on board—here is his suite. There are Colons thus (sketch). There are officers (sketch). There is a Bey of Tunis (sketch), some good mosaics and a rotten bazaar. . . ."

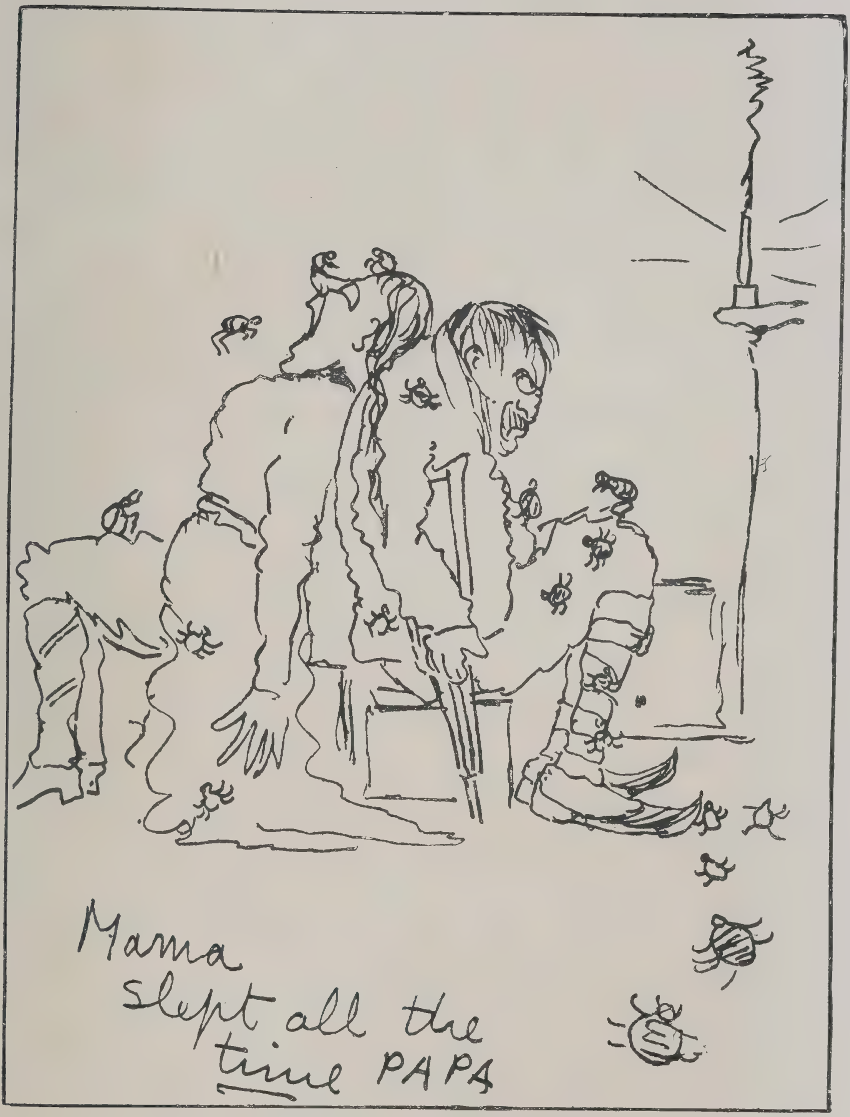
TO HIS WIFE.

MAKTAR.
February 15, 1911.

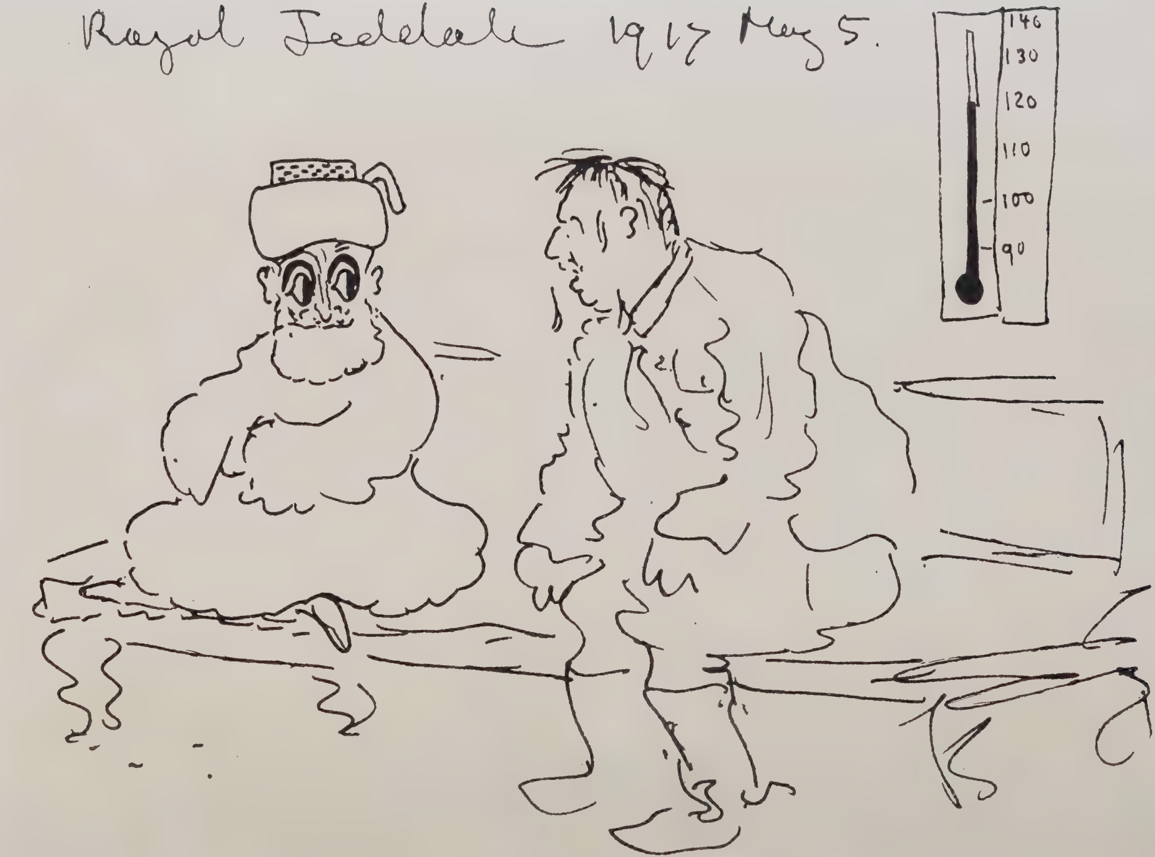
The country is not like anything I have seen, with high mountains covered with scrub and yellow ground. The people are really wretched, starving, depressed, aloof, and heavily taxed. The French have at least 15,000 soldiers in the country, and one battalion of Tommies would more than suffice. Conscription is in full swing, and nothing escapes taxation, dogs and cats inclusive. There is no education of natives, and considerable extortion, as, for example, in this region, when the French came they ordered the Arabs to pay certain taxes. The Arabs didn't pay. The French let them off for ten years, and then insisted on full payment of arrears. Of course the Arabs had no "ready," so the French confiscated the whole of the land.

I say that I never come across such beastliness in Turkey. So to Pichon, a colonial village of wretched Italians and three French families and the inevitable "*contrôle civil*" and officials. Nothing doing. Last week the diligence and post were robbed by poor Arabs driven to desperation with hunger. Lunched and rode on, passing scores of wretched, ragged, starving natives, who only scowl helplessly at a hat and go on, so to a collection of tents, passing a number of badly run ruinous farms in the hands of "*Colorés*" settled on confiscated land. At the tents some Arabs who seemed half angry, half frightened. Presently they began to talk, two years of famine, but no remission of taxes. "If the Colonials' cattle eat our crops we can do nothing, if our cattle stray on to the Colonials' land it is confiscated." Poor devils, no wonder they do not like a hat, and no wonder they are starving. An Italian labourer on the road can barely live on six francs a day, everything is so dear. What must be the lot of poor Fellahin tent-dwellers with no crops! Besides, the sheep and goats are dying at the rate of 70 per cent. of a herd. Slept at the Arab village and left in the morning, through a forest and over a mountain to this place MAKTAR, where live nine Italians, two Colons, thirty Arabs, and eighteen officials, *chefs*, *sous-chefs*, *inspecteurs*, *assistants*, *clercs*, etc., etc. Here a vile *cabaret*, and all my luggage foundered on the way. I put on a military face and announced myself as *M. le Colonel Seekes* to the *Gérant*, representing the *Chef de Contrôle Civile*. My title and aspect produced a clean bed in the official rest house.

When I think of Egyptian Nationalists, it makes me wish


Mama
Slept all the
time PAPA

A NIGHT IN A TURKISH HOUSE.



Rayol Jeddah 1917 May 5.

140
130
120
110
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90

MIDDLE EASTERN DIPLOMACY.

they could have French rule for one month. I am getting some interesting information out of my Katirji, who did six years as a soldier. Can you believe that a French captain never inspects his men's rifles, and only goes round their quarters once a month, although he is in uniform all day long! Can you believe that they send out a regiment on a route march and don't care how many men fall out, and only take away their rifles and ammunition and let them shift for themselves? Can you believe that when the men go in full marching order the officers carry nothing but their swords?

TEBESSA.

The only way this country could be worked would be large Capitalists employing natives, but this would not profit the "democracy" of France, hence the present system. French Colonists are practically free of taxation, get reduced railway fares, get special consideration from the Judges, and yet are quite worthless and incapable. The troops in Tunis number 20,000; in Algeria 120,000. In Tunis I find native taxation works out to about £2 per acre per head, yet the roads are not made and the towns are too filthy for words. A law has been passed confiscating all stray animals, not to be returned under pain of a fine of 1 franc 30 per day, and this in a *desert*. I went to Church this morning. Population of French about 2,000, congregation fifteen Italians (men), and perhaps twenty women (French and Italian). The Arabs, of course, are drunken and vicious.

I gather that within two years there will be a wider expanse of mismanagement, and I am pretty certain a sudden and violent upheaval within the next ten years. I am sure you cannot methodically irritate, ignore and exasperate three million people without an eventual smash on a large and irrevocable scale.

ORAN.

Back at Oran. No LETTERS, NO TELEGRAMS! This correspondence is getting one-sided to a degree. My letter of last night was cut short by the entry of a party "*en auto*" of one beautiful and petulant lady and four admirers, elderly, whom she cursed and stormed at with great freedom. Her complaints were (1) the hotel was *affreux,* (2) the car was *ignoble,* (3) the dinner was *dégoutant,* (4) the Paysage was *morne,* (5) the inhabitants were *abrutis,* (6) and why in the name of God had it ever been put into her head to enter into so vile, ridiculous and unthinkably idiotic an expedition; with which she left her friends and went upstairs, whither none dared follow. The four admirers were left in their fears, looking like the French Army after the capitulation of Sedan!

This morning I rose at five and came here. Had an interesting talk with the French *attaché* with the Spaniards at Melilla. He saw five hundred killed in thirty minutes by the Moroccans, he standing on a hill about 800 yards away; his description was extraordinary. The wretched Spaniards simply ran and were cut down like sheep; they had never been drilled nor taught how to shoot nor anything else; they were sent to battle within thirty minutes of landing. Their officers did not know their right hand from their left, and there were no doctors.

February 26, 1911.

In India we rule to maintain order, in Egypt ditto. In South Africa we fight a war in order to establish a sound state independent of ourselves. New Zealand and Australia are two foreign countries with strong Imperial sentiments. The French scheme has no connexion with anything of the above kind. The English Empire has been formed to amuse and employ an aristocracy, the French Empire to profit a democratic bureaucracy. This produces an absolute antithesis. Algeria is part of modern France, just as Canada is part of old France.

Once in Parliament, Mark naturally became a first-hand and sometimes a first-class authority on Eastern affairs. Certainly there was none in the House who could gainsay him. In October, 1911, he went to Constantinople to watch the war between Turkey and Italy, and pointed out that " Italy's war must gall and vex every pious Indian Moslem. On the eve of the Delhi Durbar we have little cause to rejoice." To Professor Browne he wrote:

November 9, 1911.

Of course I always think of this country first, because that is my business, but I am terrified at Grey's policy. It is getting us into the very devil of a mess. Italy's action unless repudiated must set the whole of the Moslem world against us, and if the Moslem world is against us we are done. We only rule by favour of Moslems because we play the game nine times out of ten.

His speeches on Eastern questions in the House were often wiser than he or his hearers could have dreamed. Half prophetically and half in sheer common sense he used to touch points which afterwards assumed shape and colour when the background became war.

On May 29, 1913, he said, complimenting Sir Edward Grey on maintaining the peace of Europe: "It is not, I think, the fear of war that keeps nations from war so much as the fear of unsuccessful war. I submit that even bloated armaments are very often just as good friends of peace as vegetarianism, Esperanto or anything of that kind. The question of the Dardanelles is the great question between England and the Ottoman Empire. If we do not participate in the development of S. Mesopotamia I am sure that our position in the Persian Gulf is as good as lost, no matter what treaties our diplomatists may make. Our position in the Persian Gulf with regard to the Dardanelles and in Egypt is wholly bound up in the future of the Ottoman Empire itself. There are two laws. One for the defendant when it is Moslem against

Christian, and one for the plaintiff when it is Christian against Moslem. I submit that civilized nations and even continents suffer for the crimes which they commit upon any portion of humanity, and unless Europe makes an *amende honorable* to the Ottoman Empire, great trouble is in store for Europe."

And on August 12, 1913: "The break-up of the Ottoman Empire in Asia must bring the powers of Europe directly confronting one another in a country where there are no frontiers because the mountains are parallel to the littoral, and because there being only three rivers, one moving in a circle and the others running side by side over a level plain, it is very difficult for any power to find a frontier. That very awkward geographical situation troubled the mind of Alexander the Great, the mind of Diocletian and the mind of Constantine." And it came in time to trouble the minds of the British War Office; but this was a thought Mark kindly left unsaid.

In September, 1913, he left for Asia Minor to study the effects of the Balkan War on Turkey. Near Cilicia he discovered an unknown Byzantine monastery, and at Ermenek a fine tomb containing three colossal stone lions of which he made careful drawings and measurements. At Uzunja Burj he found a marble statue which he thought to be of the Emperor Caracalla. During this journey he very nearly came to an untoward end, being bitten by a dog while rabies was prevalent. He rushed to the Pasteur Institute at Constantinople, where his much-journeying wife came to be with him. To enjoy the privilege of being Mark's wife it was necessary to be ready to depart at any moment to any given spot in the world. Great, however is the law of compensation. Mark's dear mother was certainly a quite impossible person, but he did marry the only possible wife, and be it said here that through her he achieved all he ever set out to achieve, and that only death could defeat her courage and inspiration in his service. In this December, 1913, she brought him back from the East alive and splendidly matured to face the last work before him.

CHAPTER IX

POLITICAL

MARK had no early desire for Parliament, though he held strong views. His tendencies were mostly anti-parliamentary. Occasional quotations from his South African letters follow:

April 4, 1900.

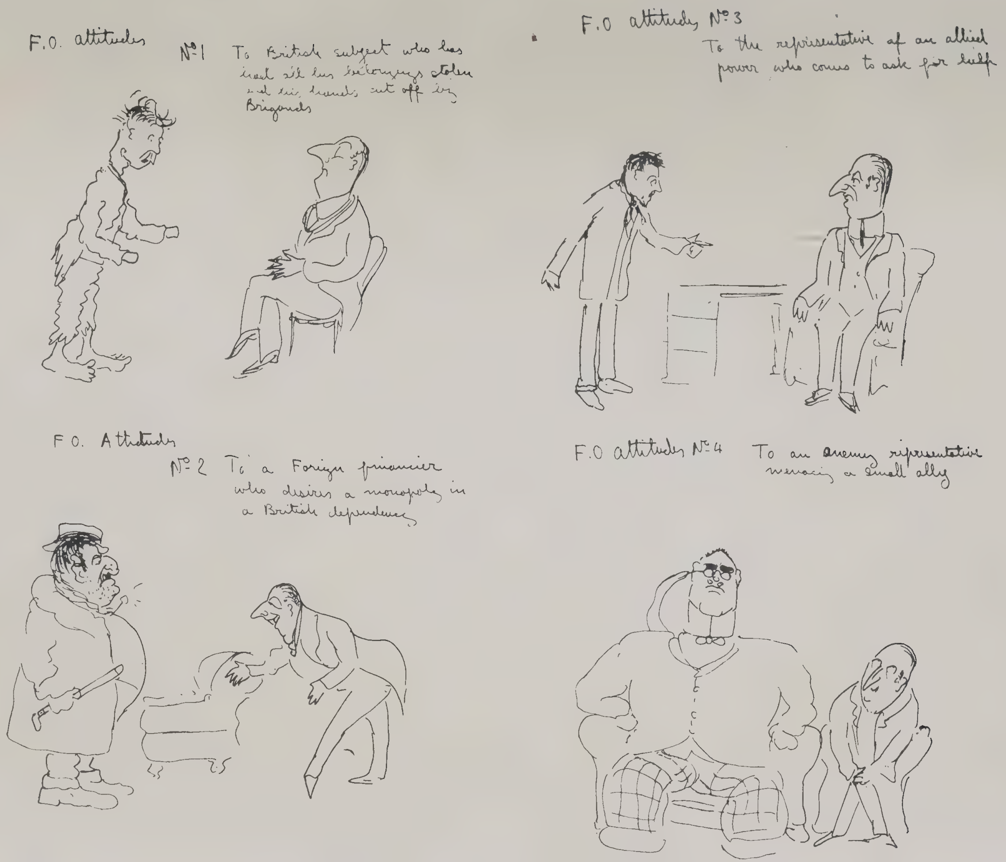
People want me to go into Parliament at the next General Election, which I consider in every way ridiculous, as I know enough to know how ignorant I am and how unfit to go into Parliament for at least six years, because when I do go in it will not be as a voting-machine, that I think you may imagine. . . .

July 15, 1900.

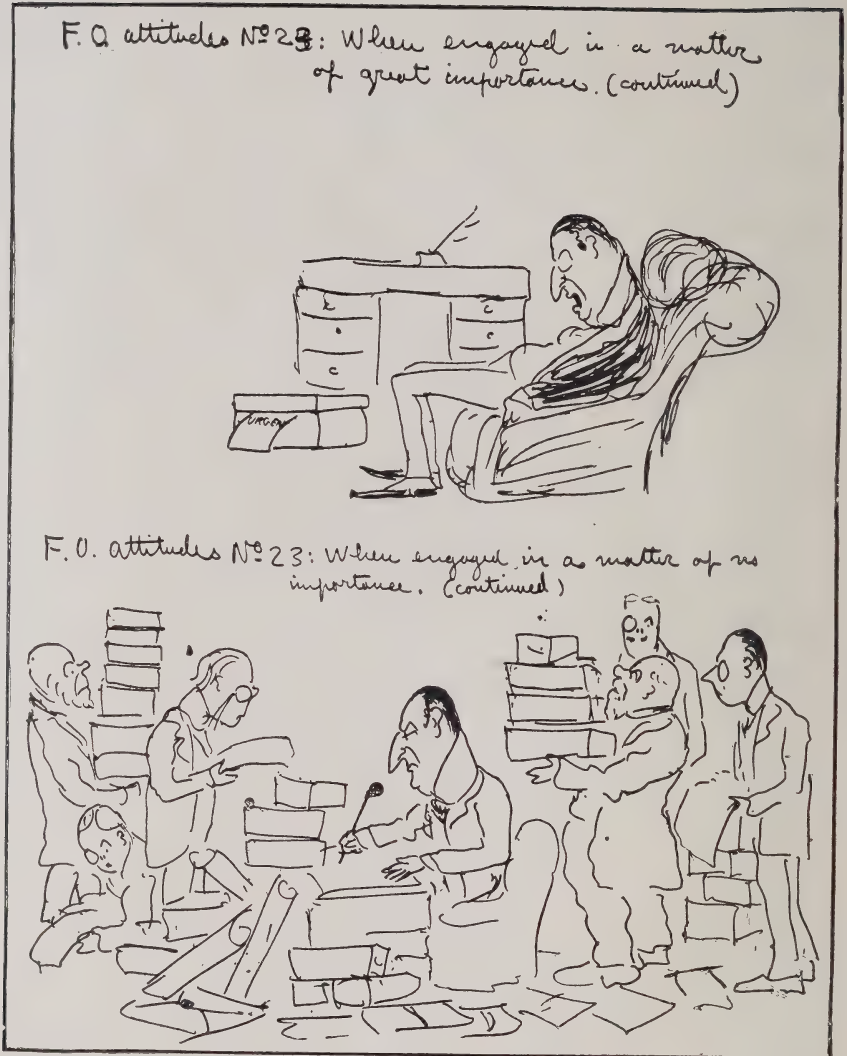
In politics there is no right or wrong. Strength and guile are the only standards. For instance, I want to get into Parliament. I lie to my constituents. I bribe, as far as I can. If my opponent is richer and a more accomplished liar I am defeated. In international politics it is the same. A country makes a treaty under compulsion and stands by it as long as it is the weakest.

February 26, 1901.

I am preparing my next book. I have written a play and write to you every week, yet I am idle. I have read book after book, even "Sartor Resartus," and yet I am idle! I keep twelve Kaffirs in order, yet I am idle! I quarrel, report, curse, fight! Yet I am idle! In what, pray, am I idle? In the last three years I have spent twenty-nine months under canvas, and yet I am idle! Just because I will not go into Parliament I am idle. Parliament! What


F.O. attitudes
No. 1 To British subject who has had all his belongings stolen and his hands cut off by Brigands
F.O. attitudes No. 3
To the representative of an allied power who comes to ask for help
F.O. Attitudes
No. 2 To a Foreign financier who desires a monopoly in a British dependency
F.O attitudes No. 4 To an enemy representative menacing a small ally

FOREIGN OFFICE ATTITUDES.


F. O. attitudes No 23: When engaged in a matter of great importance. (continued)
URGEN
F. O. attitudes No 23: When engaged in a matter of no importance. (continued)

FOREIGN OFFICE ATTITUDES,

is there to do in Parliament? Vote as you are told? That is being idle! Already I see you saying: "But you needn't vote as you are told." Faugh! What are the fellows who don't, eh? Labouchere? Bowles? Bartlett? Bryn Roberts? Burns?

May 15, 1901.

The more I read of Parliament, the more firmly convinced am I that I am not intended for such a career. No, a respectable crossing would be more useful, more glorious, and more interesting. You will see in the next few years the decline and fall of parliamentary government. There will evolve from the present system a series of small councils settling private affairs, and a cabinet the affairs of the nation, and no blithering sessions.

I have just written a snorter to some individuals who want to know whether I will stand at the next election for the Buckrose division as a Conservative. I have told them that I am neither *a buffoon, an office seeker, nor a hypocrite,* that I cannot talk sonorous twaddle for endless hours, that I have neither a large stomach nor a white waistcoat, and am in fact in no way fitted for a local magnate, that I have no sympathy with the opposition, but I consider the present government the most hopeless, incompetent jelly that has ever quivered in a British Cabinet. With which I left them and bade adieu to the Conservatives of East Yorkshire!

Mark's party views were discreetly made known to Henry Cholmondeley as follows:

As regards politics, you can tell the Worshipful Conservatives that I am *not:*

A PRO-BOER.
A LITTLE ENGLANDER.
AN ANARCHIST.
A SOCIALIST.
A CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST.
A PECULIAR PERSON.

And further:

That it is impossible to be a Conservative when there is nothing left to Conserve. That it would be foolish to abolish the House of Peers lest something worse come in its place.

That education requires more attention than it receives.

That the Poor Laws require considerable revision.

That the Game Laws require attention both destructively and constructively.

That Home Rule is absurd.

That the Army requires an entirely new remodelling.

That if we are not able to produce an efficient army of mercenaries, we must resort to conscription.

That at present things are too hopelessly chaotic to choose a party.

That if matters come to the continental status of Labour Socialists and Cranks and the rest, I would gladly stand for Parliament on the side of "the rest."

But that if being all these things and holding these opinions constitutes a Conservative, then I am one of them, and if not—well, I am not. With which I leave the Worshipful Conservatives of the East Riding. These are my opinions, and if you give them out you will be kicked by Lord Middleton, punched by St. Quentin, and damned by the rest of them. I can picture you at a crowded meeting giving vent to these fearful blasphemies. I can also picture your retirement, but those are my opinions and you can tell them so.

However, from the dim backgrounds of Asia Minor he began to meditate joining the home scuffle. "Politics will really be great fun in a year's time. O don't you never fear I'm going into them. We will give battle to cant and incompetence, and we will fight or buy those Labour members."

The rise of Labour to power filled his correspondence with anxious side-notes. It is interesting that as early as 1907 he foreshadowed the necessity of

Labour Exchanges, when he noticed an unemployed man walking from Hull and meeting at Sledmere another walking from Liverpool, both in search of work. Mark noted : " A deal is said about Socialism. Consequently I read up Marx, Laveleye, Paul Leroy, Beaulieu, Blatchford and a few others, only to discover that the mass of English Socialists know little or nothing about Socialism. The question in my mind is, Will the great fluctuating majority be captured by the Socialists, anti-nationalists, humanitarians and atheists, or can England, which Cobden loved as dearly as any man, be saved from herself? "

To Sir Nicholas O'Conor he wrote :

August 27, 1907.

As far as I can see, the Government is talking of " Peers, Carpenters, and Kings " in order to avoid chatting pleasantly on the inviting subject of the general distribution of property. I rather think the labouring classes are going to take a bit between their teeth at the next General Election. I certainly miss the East very much. Even a " palace spy " would add to the picturesqueness of this country. It is just because it is so ugly that people are discontented, I believe.

And to his father-in-law in the same year :

May 10, 1907.

I want you if possible to drive in the idea that a good landlord is much cheaper than a corrupt, pushing, clique-ridden, middle-class, salary-cadging bureaucracy, which seems to me to be what the solicitor's clerk who calls himself a " Labour member " desires.

Other straws of speech show his line : " Of one thing rest assured. Men will always love beastly habits and there will *never* be a golden age ! "

"If we continue to develop as we have in the past forty years, the farmer of 1950 will be a scientist and the labourer a skilled mechanic. Of course this is a matter for sentimental regret. I suggest that Mr. H. G. Wells has a more intelligent grasp of the future and shows greater prescience in his two books "Anticipations" and "Utopia" than Mr. Jesse Collings. It never seems to have occurred to our legislators that a rural population is not necessarily a population with agrarian pursuits. Take Turkey in Asia in the Anatolian provinces as an example."

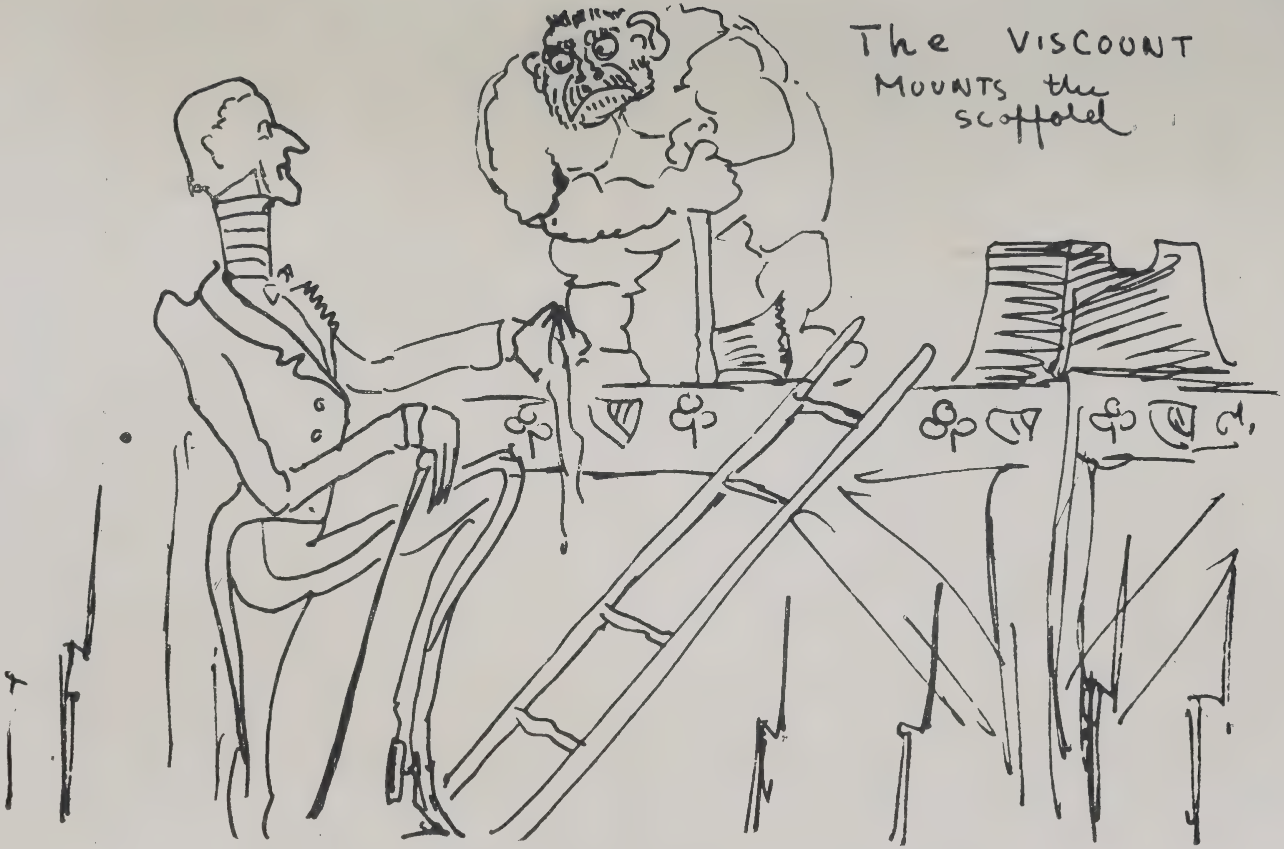
So wrote and spoke a "resurrectionist Young Englander." Though no Home Ruler as yet, he could whisper: "But really between ourselves, you know, although we do our best to make people happy under our rule, we have such an unpleasant fashion of doing it that people would often prefer a tyranny to our noble freedom." And like Disraeli, he perceived that squires were strongly democratic, save on the touchy subject of poachers. He wrote to Mr. Beck (February 25, 1907): "I am now home for good, and making a political plunge. Tory Democracy is what I am going to try and push for all it is worth." Behind him was his wife, for in marrying Sir John Gorst's daughter he had married into the Fourth Party, and she was as capable of canvassing with him in Yorkshire as in another sense in Asia Minor. Disraeli remained his star and Toryism his pennon, and when he threw his hat into the political ring at Nafferton, he rejected the word Conservative, "which smacked too much of mummification and preserved fruit" (February 9, 1907), and in the *Hull Times* he cried aloud : " Is this carrying into effect the testament of that mighty genius Disraeli, whose figure looms greater instead of lessening? " Before Primrose Day that year he was chosen candidate for Buckrose and politely announced the fact to his Liberal rival Sir Luke White :

> *April* 4, 1907.
>
> As you represent the division, I consider that you are the first person who should be informed. I should also like to say that it will always be my endeavour to make the contest as impersonal as possible, and to assist you (if I may so express myself) in maintaining that high standard of orderliness for which the Buckrose division has been noted since you have represented it. May I also add that I hope that this development will not in any way alter those pleasant relations which have always subsisted between us.

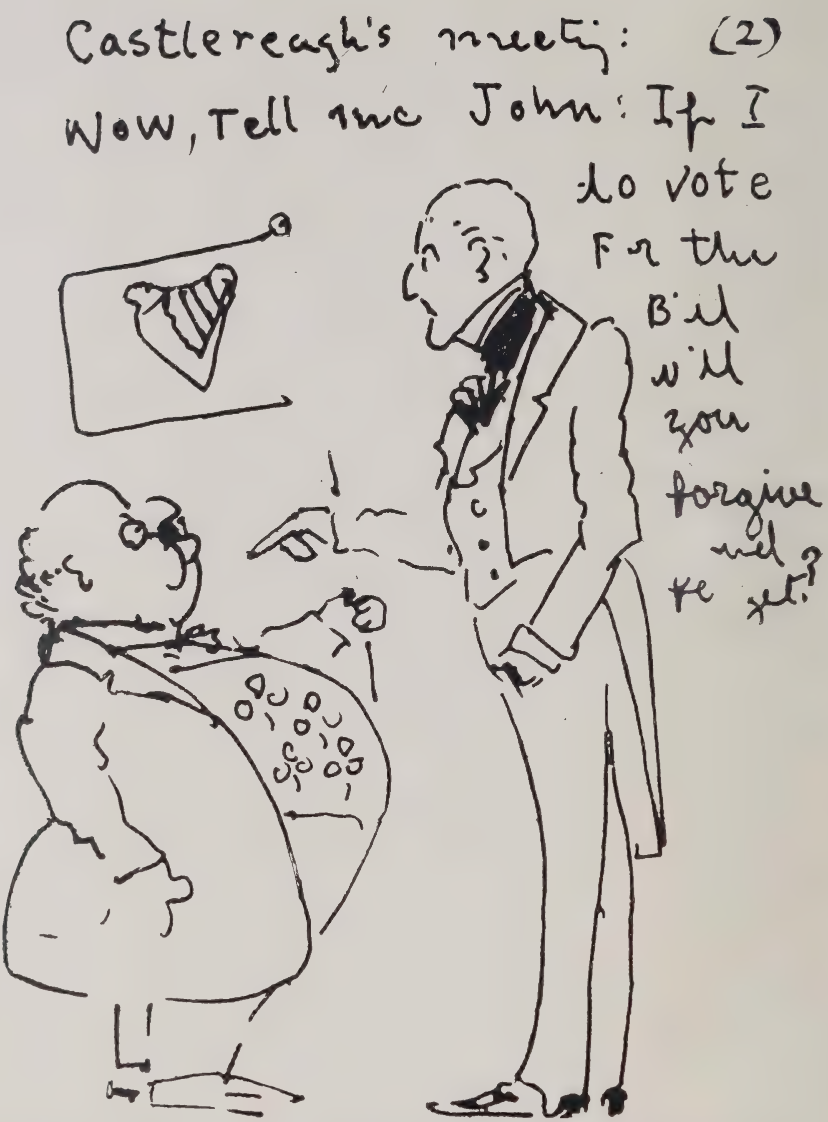
The two-rounded battle between Luke and Mark was soon clinched. Buckrose, with its 10,000 electors and hundred parishes, had only been held by Christopher Sykes after unseating the Liberal on petition. Christopher had lost by one vote, but the petition returned him by eleven. The seat had been Liberal since 1892, and what manner of man was the sitting member might be judged from the *Bridlington Free Press* (December 17, 1909) : " His life from boyhood to knighthood has been a romance. He has done honour to his name, his country and his constituency. He is a man the British House of Commons would be the poorer without. Is there a man in England who has sacrificed more to serve his fellow countrymen? "

Time alone inclined the electors of Buckrose to moderate their rosy view, especially when they found they were poorer with than without the romantic knight of nonconformity. Mark never suspected how keen an arrow he had loosed when he once called the indignant Luke a humbug. When Luke complained of personal criticism, Mark sent a list of names applied to himself by Luke's supporters, such as "Man of Words, Nabob, Flunkey, Papist, Political Clown, *Enfant Terrible*, Clumsy Sophist"! but in exchanges of humour he often gave more than he got. Asked what he would do if the Pope commanded him to take arms against England, he replied: "What would Sir Luke White do if Dr. Clifford told him to assassinate the Archbishop of Canterbury?" (Loud laughter.) White was very indignant at being called "an unknown nonentity" by a Tory, and Mark apologized by drawing parallels: "If Mr. Burns referred to Mr. Balfour as a silent golfer I should laugh. If Lord Lansdowne referred to Sir Edward Grey as a well-meaning young scholar I should laugh." In answer to the cry that rich men produce poor men he suggested "hanging a Liberal cocoa-millionaire and using his money to start a Department for inspecting Hedge Bottoms for Vagrants." (Loud laughter.) And again we read that when he said: "The Government out of shame had granted the old age pensions," and a Voice from the Wolds asked: "Then why did not the other party grant them?" "I suppose because they were shameless!"—(Laughter)—was the reply.

Out of the Liberal sink Mark only excepted Lord Rosebery, "that inactive Triton among pretentious minnows." The Lloyd George Budget was only "a


The VISCOUNT MOUNTS the scaffold

THE LAST OF THE ARISTOCRATS: LORD LONDONDERRY.


Castlereagh's meeting: (2)
Now, Tell me John: If I do vote For the Bill will you forgive me te yet?

JOHN REDMOND AND LORD CASTLEREAGH (LONDONDERRY).

destructive substitute for Tariff Reform," and if, as alleged, a Duke cost two Dreadnoughts, Mark averred that "a prosperous grocer cost half a squadron of Yeomanry!"

While he ragged the Radicals he often shocked such Tories as the learned Lord Newton by assimilating Socialism to Tory Democracy. He called for landlords, who neglected their estates, to be broken like reeds, and for every Tory member to show himself to be a true Labour member. "If I were a working man, my house insanitary, my wage low, my child sweated, my wife ailing, my employment hazardous, I should vote labour." So spoke Young England!

Meantime he studied the children in Hull slums, the Middlesbrough blast-furnaces and the Filey fishermen. An account of a wild night out at sea in Skipper Hunter's yawl appeared in a letter worthy to be added to Herman Melville's "Moby Dick."

August 25, 1908.

Never have I had such a time. We started at three yesterday with a fair stiff breeze. The *Star of Hope* is twenty tons, with no deck, and is plastered inside and out with the entrails of herrings and other residue. The crew were five, including the captain, six including myself. Well, we did nothing but beat slowly up the coast till six, when we turned sharp to the East and went out to the open sea to a place perhaps nine miles east of Robin Hood Bay. There were about four hundred trawlers, smacks, yawls, cobbles, luggers, etc. Germans, Frenchmen, Cornishmen, Irishmen, Dutchmen, Lowestoft men, Grimsby men, Whitby men, and Scotchmen. They are not allowed to trawl. All has to be done by drift nets. The steamers set their nets by day and wait. The cobbles hunt about and put down no nets till they are sure of fish. When it was dark the fleet looked like a huge town, all showing green, red and white lights. When it was quite dark we began to sail about in and out of the fleet, looking for phosphorous patches that show where the herrings are. Talk of seamanship! Think of four hundred ships, some sailing, others steaming, others drifting, many with no lights, mostly of different nationalities, bells ringing, horns tooting, lights flashing, but very little shouting. Presently I heard a fearful squash and gurgle, followed by a report like a gun. This excited the men very much. "It's a blaw-fish—there mun be 'errin' aboot." "What's a blow-fish?" "Oah, we calls 'em blow-fish. Scotties calls 'em waales!" It turns out that all the herring grounds are full of whales, running up to 30 feet in length, and the fishermen use them as pilots to a certain extent since they are always near the shoals. Presently the water turned quite pale, and we were in a shoal. After that there was no talking till all the nets had been dropped. In doing so we found a Scotsman's net, but we got away unobserved. Then we seemed to get nearly run down by a lightless boat, but Hunter seemed quite happy. After we had dropped sixteen nets, it began to blow like fury. Three hours we lay jolting and jarring, not rolling or pitching. It is too fast for any of those expressions. At one time it blew so hard we thought we should have to run for it, but about three the storm abated and we began pulling in the nets. Three times the floor of the boat was covered with the silver of the herrings. Each time they were swept into a sort of trough amidships. At last after an hour and a half's work the nets were all shipped and 1,700 herrings had been caught. We then set off for Scarborough, landing at ten-thirty. I never knew before that whales sat by the fishermen's nets, waiting for the fish that fall out and are crippled. It reminded me of Pliny's dolphins. Pliny, however, does not say that the breath of whales, when they be olde, stynketh so that men grow sicke of the very stench.

The year 1910 brought two general elections, at each of which Mark was defeated for Buckrose, first by 218 and then by 232 votes, though the former Liberal majority had been 1,600. Mark took it in a splendid spirit, true to his words: "If you choose to give me a political career, I will take it up, but if not, I have my books and I can go back to my plough." Back went Coriolanus to Sledmere. Back to Westminster went the romantic carpet-knight! From the name of Buckrose the name of Luke White remains indissociable. On one point Mark was overwhelmed with ridicule by his opponent, the so-called German danger. Mark pointed out that war had always brought profit, but diplomacy humiliation to Germany, and here she was, "doomed to remain desperately prolific." Mark foretold war and even the invasion of Yorkshire. White sagely rebuked him in the noble words: "There would be no war with Germany. There was a happy relation between King Edward and the German Emperor. He had been given to understand that the Germans were about to land at Hunmanby Gap." (Loud laughter.) And again he announced that Mark had special information that the first shell would fall in that district. "It was a scare simply to bamboozle the electors of Buckrose," whose de-bamboozlement naturally could only be expected to begin with the bombardment of Scarborough from sea in the second year of the World War. Meantime the prophetic Mark was rejected in his own constituency.

All through his elections Mark was watched like a political son by George Wyndham, whose letters arrived like winged arrows;

"Difficulties were made to be surmounted," Wyndham wrote (November 9, 1909), "but as how? It is all very well for you to say Driffield wants a star of first magnitude. There are none. Besides, as they would say in Ireland, how can any be expected to do Driffield whilst I take the larger meeting?"

December 22, 1909: "The spirit moves me to tell you that I have just read your reply to 'Sir Luke' with much satisfaction. It dispels a doubt whether I did you a good turn by talking, ill at that, of the corn tax; hence the relief. My experience, during the many speeches I have made since we met, is that only by explaining the corn tax can we explode the lie which accuses us of substituting Taxes on Food for the 'beneficent' Budget. That is a political gain. But it is a national duty to warn our countrymen of the risk they run so long as they trust the Foreigner for half their bread in War."

January 29, 1910: "My joy over the elections, which is calm but deep, is spoilt by Buckrose. I probably mind it more than you do, for you have had the zest and glory of a grand fight and moral victory. You must consider what you want to do, and let me know, in the way of fighting Buckrose again or getting another seat. Think it over quietly. There are only three unsuccessful Unionists whom I want to help, if I can, to an early seat—yourself, Amery and Ian Malcolm. You must choose between wooing Buckrose once more and getting a perfectly safe seat somewhere else. It would not be worth your while to leave

Buckrose (and a hole no one can fill behind you) except for an absolutely gilt-edged security in an important constituency."

December 20, 1910: "All that you say is true, and it is greatly to your credit that you do not say more. I shall insist on your being offered a good seat *quam primum;* and when I say 'insist' I mean that I am going to take the gloves off. Also there are 150 young fellows on our side who are utterly sick and mean to have a change. It is good of you not to reproach me. Having been a soldier and realizing that the staff work on our side was all at sixes and sevens, I determined simply to obey orders for this time. But now we must reconstruct the machine. I longed to come and fight for you. I implored them to send you A. J. B. or F. E. Smith. I spent 15s. on telegrams about you. It went to my heart to pass Malton twice on my long, unnecessary journeys. I may tell you that I spoke to fifteen meetings in twelve constituencies, and that the staff work was such that I was sent up and down three times and travelled well over 2,600 miles. I begged them to let me go to you instead of Whitby or Worksop. But no! If it is any comfort to you, let me add that no one has given me a word of thanks, and that the Central Office did their worst to ruin me by rapid cancellation and substitution of orders. Do not take it to heart. I will see that justice is done to you."

December 29, 1910: "Your mother telegraphed to me about Horncastle. I am writing about you to the authorities. But I fear from what I know of

Lincolnshire that it presents all the Nonconformist difficulty of Buckrose."

December 31, 1910: "I will write particularly in respect of Cambridge University. But they keep these seats very close and are not very ready to accept suggestions from outside. Waldstein would not have influence, and M. James holds himself aloof. Would Browne run you?"

The following year the run of bad luck seemed to continue, for Sledmere House was burned in May, but in compensation Mark was elected Member for Central Hull on July 5. The Buckrose Division had cast out the prophet in his own Riding, and his fame was henceforth inseparable from Hull. Sir Seymour King, the sitting member for twenty-five years, had been unseated on petition, and Mark had no difficulty in retaining the seat. His uncle had entered the House in 1884, and his great-grandfather exactly a hundred years previously, in 1784. Mark described the next stage to his delighted wife:

> My entry into the House was very funny. The first person waiting below the bar was Luke, who most heartily congratulated me and wrung me by the hand. I was then marched up, and the Speaker seemed really pleased. George Wyndham fussed and fretted and fumed and worked himself into the most terrible stew. My next exploit was really very funny. There was a division on Friendly Societies. Luke had sworn to help them. Lloyd George divided the House on the question. As I went to the Lobby I found Geoffrey Howard. "O do you actually know your way into the Lobby?" "Yes," said I, "and am showing Luke the way too!" . . . Lloyd George is really a very great genius. He is the biggest man in the House by lengths. He has

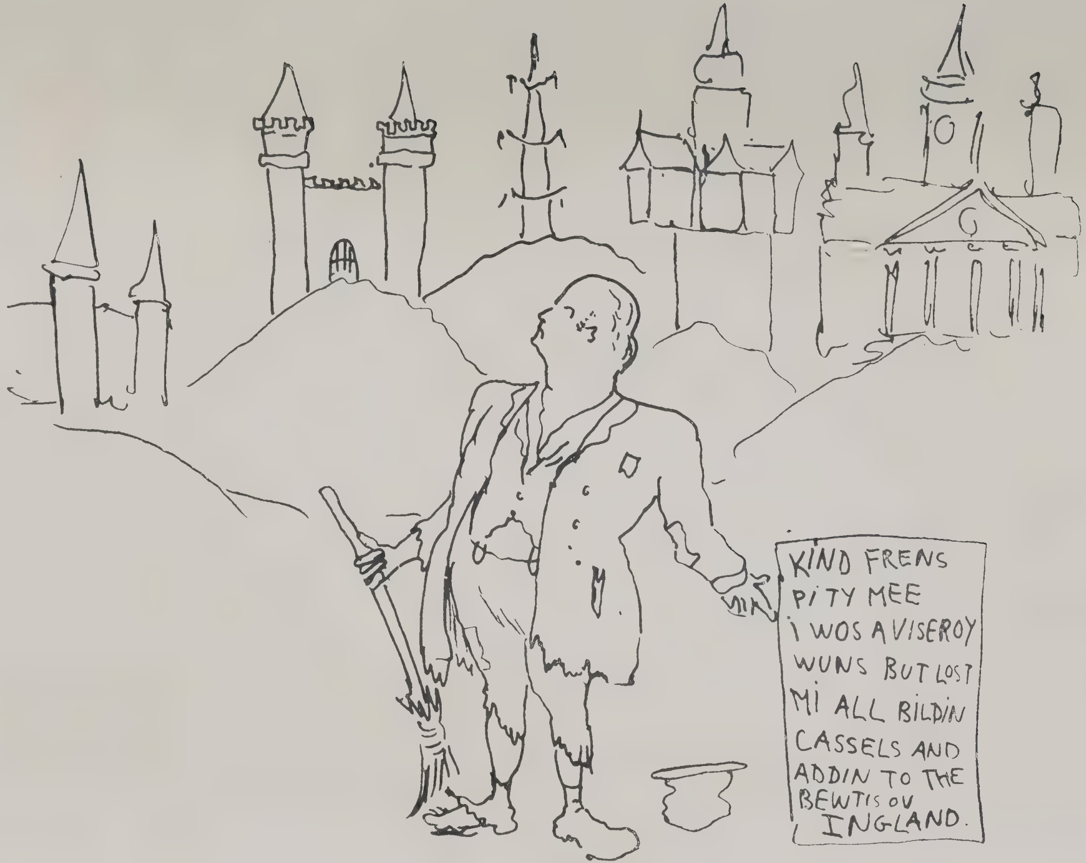
charm, fascination, personality, sympathy, agility, and is much more than clever. He may make a great change in his politics at any moment. This is my impression, not based on anything I have heard. My grounds for saying this are that no man with L.G.'s personality can possibly remain a Radical for very long. The Party is as badly managed and stupid as is well imaginable. The Labour members are barren, shallow rogues. Of that there can be no doubt. They funk, rant, and jib, and then fall into line like the underbred brutes they are. I attended a Party meeting which filled me with alarm because they churned the most lamentable fustian I have heard for some time. For example: "Therefore we must open the eyes of the electorate to the most dastardly conspiracy in the annals of British history." Can you imagine one man saying this to a score of others in a large, empty room and those others cheering as though they believed it? I said: "The working classes are not anxious about the Constitution. They neither like nor dislike Lords. They are pleased with Old Age Pensions, and will like the Insurance Bill until it is law. If there is a General Election, we shall probably lose a number of seats and probably not see office for twenty years." Prayers are fine and interesting. John Redmond is getting very old. The Irish are never in the House. Mond is the one thing that gives me pleasure. He is quite perfect. I found a nice old thing with a top-hat who looks after coats, and who said: "I have seen two generations and you are the third—Mr. George Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Christopher and yourself."

Mark bided his time to make his maiden speech in the House (November 27, 1911) after Sir Edward Grey had spoken on Anglo-German relations. Mark followed Mr. Dillon, and in a brilliant manner touched on every national danger from Tunis to Travancore. He dealt with opinion in Morocco and Persia. As for Turkey, whatever was the British policy, it had alienated the Young Turks. "With regard to the war in Tripoli, he expressed the greatest admiration for Turkish officers, but he should not like to take a ship into harbour mined by a Turkish officer even if that officer were piloting him!" (Laughter.) "After an earthquake in Turkish territory which destroyed a powder magazine he remembered finding a Turkish general sitting on the ruins smoking a cigarette and the men digging out shells with steel-pointed picks." (Laughter.) He pointed out that there were people of the same faith among Arabs and Indians. He feared the spark from Tripoli. The result of the speech was remarkable. The Liberal Prime Minister rose and congratulated the Tory recruit! As Mark put it very modestly in a letter to Lady Londonderry, the last *Grande Dame* of Toryism, the next day:

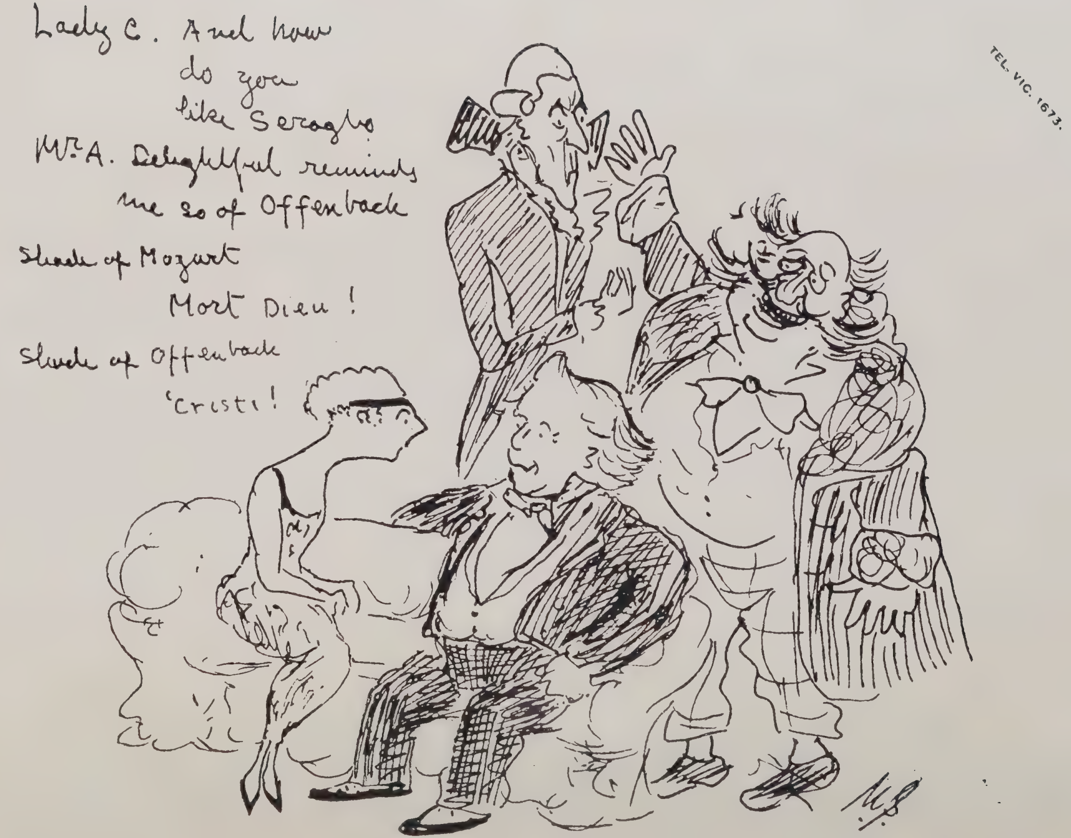
> I had an extraordinary run of luck. (*A*) Dillon had wearied the House till it was ready to cheer anyone or anything. (*B*) I knew the subject. (*C*) It was not controversial. (*D*) Asquith himself is a Yorkshireman. Take also into consideration that it was a pure fluke that the P.M. spoke directly after me, but it is very nice all the same.

To Lord Curzon's congratulations he replied:

> *November* 30, 1911.
>
> What a satisfaction it was to me to get your letter this morning, because your writing is different from other people's inasmuch as you know the whole case, and perhaps you alone. Such people know London to Vienna, some Vienna to Basra, some Basra to Bhamon, but very few London to Bhamon. It sometimes rather frightens me to think that nothing can happen in the world without involving us directly or indirectly.


KIND FRENS
PITY MEE
I WOS A VISEROY
WUNS BUT LOST
MI ALL BILDIN
CASSELS AND
ADDIN TO THE
BEWTIS OV
INGLAND.

LORD CURZON IN UNEMPLOYMENT.


TEL. VIC. 1673.
Lady C. And how do you like Seraglio
Mr. A. Delightful reminds me so of Offenbach
Shade of Mozart Mort Dieu!
Shade of Offenbach 'Cristi!

LADY CUNARD AND MR. ASQUITH AT A CONCERT.

But the Tories hardly gave him the satisfaction he gave them: "The fact is our party is somnolent and stupid, while Parliament is now *incapable of debate*—to talk to a brick wall is always discouraging to reason—and the result of two brick walls talking to each other for an indefinite period has ended in reason being eliminated from debate."

Finally, when the veto of the Lords was abolished, he wrote to his wife (a brick, but no wall):

August 9, 1911.

I went and sat through Lincoln's and Henry's speeches. The scene in the Lords was most wonderful—a scene perhaps never to be seen again. Four hundred English gentlemen—independent, honest, determined and at variance. No one knows how the division will go. Every speech has its effect. The last deliberate assembly in Europe will have ceased to be as such in another five days, or perhaps less. Even the horde of Radicals at the bar among whom I stood were impressed. We shall never see such a scene again—the Lord Chancellor on the Woolsack, and around him generals, ambassadors, lords lieutenant, governors, diplomatists, gentlemen and bishops. Below the bar a knot of greedy adventurers, cranks and lawyers. What a contrast! And the silly White City crowd don't care and the poor, ragged docker crowd are too pinched to know in the second. Well, needs must we shog on somehow. F. E. Smith told me in as many words that he is going eventually to lead. . . . He talked wild nonsense, but I listened with care. When I spoke to F. E. of the future, of the necessity of a constitutional campaign, of the dangers of fifteen years hence, he saw nothing. He said: "You must never look ahead!" This is desperate, for this fellow with a tongue and an aptitude for debate has no belief, no principle, and yet he has some power, for he has outstripped fairish men, such as Duke.

Mark would have been the first to recognize that since Mark's death F. E. Smith has shown principle and recognition of Necessity at least, that iron Nurse of God. However, to return:

> To-night the worst has happened that could have happened. The Royal footmen and the bishops have betrayed Toryism finally and for ever. This at least must be the end of the Balfour regime. But how we are to face the people I for one do not know—indeed, I hardly care. This vile Bill is accepted—snobbery, flunkeyism, weakness, and folly have allied with hypocrisy and anarchy. Had you seen the grinning faces of Grey, Winston and Lloyd George you would have known how great a disaster has befallen us.

While Mark could see a constitutional tragedy in the fall of the Lords' veto, it is amusing to compare a series of comic sketches of peers which he drew in South Africa (March 18, 1901) and sent home:

> Looking at the English papers I see members of the peerage in every strange sort of profession. If only Hogarth were alive now, what funny pictures he might draw of men and their ancestors, for an example:
>
> 1600.
>
> John Hunks, Cardsharper, Cheat and Bravo.
>
> 1650.
>
> Colonel Bind-their-Kings-in-chains-before-the-Lord Hashbaz Hunks of Cromwell's Ironsides.
>
> 1680.
>
> Justice Hunks, informer to Charles the Second and saviour of the British people from a great Popish plot.
>
> 1685.
>
> Sir John Hunks makes a fortune by selling prisoners taken at Sedgmoor as slaves.
>
> 1702.
>
> Lord Hunks of Hunkston made a peer because he betrayed the Jacobites.
>
> 1706.
>
> Lord Hunks of Hunkston, a courtier and politician bribed to be a Whig.

1770.

Lord Hunks of Hunkston, drunkard, spendthrift, and waster, dies in Bedlam.

1850.

Lord Hunks of Hunkston, wastes all miser had saved and more, ends as a cab-driver.

1820.

Lord Hunks of Hunkston lives on his estate in great poverty (a miser).

1901.

Lord Hunks of Hunkston marries an American heiress. After having been a cat's-meat man, a commercial traveller, a journalist and a war correspondent, buys the home of his ancestors and dies without issue, so a long line comes to an end.

Perhaps this genealogy may amuse you. If you like when I have materials I might do it really well in colours. If I became a Radical it might make a good electioneering poster.

Mark threw himself with vigour into his new life. Between his election in July and Christmas he addressed 31 meetings, 27 social gatherings, spent 50 days in Parliament, taking part in 88 divisions, asking 16 questions, with or without answers, and making one speech; 31 days doing military service, and 10 days in Constantinople. It was said that he was the only Tory from the Buckrose Division who had not lost his head over Mark's maiden speech.

His diary for one day (November 15, 1911) may be recorded:

"7.30. Rise.
8.30. Riding in the Row.
10.30. Change and secretary.
11. House of Commons.

11.30. Tripoli Mediation: committee with Keir Hardie and Silvester Horne.
1.10. Sykes and Hardie resolution rejected.
2.15. Left King's Cross.
7.30. Addressed meeting at Castleford.
8.10. Motored to Selby.
9. Special train to Hull.
9.45. Replied at banquet for the H. of C."

"He had in him a deep-rooted hatred of oppression, and this passion glowed in his speeches," wrote Aubrey Herbert. "I remember walking into the House and standing at the bar while he was making his maiden speech on the East. He was talking about the Muhajirs, the dispossessed, exiles from their home, in the rare complete silence that the House sometimes gives as a recognition to a distinguished contribution to its debates." Mark developed an intense interest in the Orient in his speeches with variations on Irish or military or Catholic themes. He perhaps combined the traditions of "Merrie" and "Young England."

There was something piquant in a Yorkshire Member specializing in the East. The varied stream of visitors to his house in Buckingham Gate were more often Turk than Tyke. "Many of these visitors," wrote Aubrey Herbert, "would have done credit to the Tower of Babel, though they had often gone through a course at the Berlitz School." Later, when the sitting Member for Hull became the authority on Zionism, the situation was worthy of a Quixote. "He made the sorrows of these people his own, and faced the difficulties of attempting to reconcile the feuds of a thousand years," wrote a friend. He became sympathetic to the Armenians with time, and, Unionist though he was, he declined to blind himself to Irish aspirations. "Like other thinking men, his views altered with the passage of years. He began by crossing swords with Mr. Redmond, and ended by debating with Sir Edward Carson." He spoke in company with the Duke of Norfolk near Leeds, and had his platform stampeded by the local Irish, led by a beautiful girl with her hair down. Asked in the Commons by a Nationalist who his assailant had been, "Molly Maguire!" answered Mark. But his speech had been fair to Ireland: "It is not a question of right or wrong. It is a question of two ships in a fog trying to avoid a collision. The majority of the people of England are in favour of a fair settlement of this question and of ensuing civil peace." When a green flag was captured by his own followers he returned it, saying, "I will not have my flag insulted, and I will not insult yours." And replying to the morbidly narrow views of Dean Hensley Henson in *The Times*, he wrote: "To argue at his rate is to find no way out of the labyrinth. A blunt uncompromising return to the *status quo* will fail, as Pitt's Union failed. The essential to a settlement is that there shall be no victory." He joined the party of few Unionists who "volunteered for the lifeboat while there was still a chance of saving the ship. The majority were for salvaging the ship after it had been wrecked." As the Irish crisis grew worse Mark made his most memorable speech in the House

(March 31, 1914) which evoked an unusual demonstration of enthusiasm. After Mr. Balfour and Mr. T. P. O'Connor had made speeches showing that neither had learnt anything during a quarter of a century, Mark appealed to both Nationalists and Unionists: "I feel that the blame must lie upon us all. We have drifted on passions, and both sides have gone from one wild cry to another until we have divided class from class, creed from creed, in order to further our policies, until at the very end of it all one cannot deny that the military forces and the very Throne itself have been involved in our quarrels." He appealed entreatingly for a federal solution with a temporary exclusion of Ulster.

Mark was hailed in the Press as the "M.P. for England," and it was generally felt that he had said what all sane men thought. In the same spirit he was appealing to Englishmen against party and class. He included Radical plutocrats in his general attack on the golfers and shooting syndicates who kept land out of cultivation. "We do not want to turn the country into a place where every man is looked after, but we want every child to have an opportunity of looking after itself." No wonder a Hull Radical wrote in the *Hull Daily Mail*: "Oh, Sir Mark, you have a great place in the great heart of England. We are all brothers, no matter what our clan. You touched our hearts once on Olympian heights. It is yours to bring us closer together in a common bond. Democracy does not fear you, no more than it does itself. Be the man to steady the ship. Be what you ought to be, a Commoner of the Commoners, and I, as every Hull man, will be proud of you as any. England first, Hull second!"

Mark could not help writing about his own position to Professor Browne:

> *April* 10, 1914.
>
> I am so glad you were pleased with my speech. The hullabaloo it has caused makes me rather nervous. I feel that the Tories look on me with suspicion, and the Reds are angling for me with flattery. Your unfortunate Mark Sykes.

Mark could touch the higher heights, whether in a speech in the House or when he was writing to the *Saturday Review*, as during the Irish crisis (March 28, 1914): "From the point of view of a Christian, an Englishman, or a soldier, the present posture of affairs is tragic and fatal; the State is threatened with religious war. The social structure is divided against itself and the Army is compromised . . . if we are to come out of this miserable jungle alive as a people we must let the dead past bury its dead in its noisome shade . . . the struggle is no longer that of Eatanswill . . . there is Ireland to develop and pacify, there are the people to house, to educate, to lead. There is the sea to hold, the peace of the world to win. There is Asia to guard and train. There is our nation to bind together in fellowship."

But how light and farcical he could be between whiles when he was speaking, say, on Proportional Representation! Election agents, he told the laughing House, regarded mankind as ballot fodder. Whips connected P.R. with cranks, and "a crank," said Mark, amid laughter, "was a wealthy man who did not want a knighthood, or an able man who did not want to be an Under-Secretary" (his own position later). And again, he prophesied that if P.R. were passed (November 22, 1917), "we shall pass in a night from Lilliput to Brobdingnag. . . . Under P.R. Napoleon will beat Mantalini in the cities every time, whereas with a strong party machine behind him and a good-mannered, brusque, poor and youthful Napoleon, Mr. Mantalini may get in with a very fair majority."

"His notes," wrote Aubrey Herbert, "were extraordinary, written in an enormous and rather childish though attractive hand. Pictures were sometimes substituted for words. An irreverent drawing of monkeys going down the River Ganges on a log, liable at any moment to capsize and throw them into the water, meant that the Cabinet was not absolutely secure. Strawberry leaves figured prominently with reference to Lloyd George's campaign against the Dukes, and sometimes the shamrock indicated Ireland. He spoke in a low voice, hesitating for words until he was caught into the current of his thoughts, when he gesticulated unconsciously, with the untidy lock of hair falling across his forehead and his eyes and face the most living things in the House. Hansard is a cold record of his spoken words." Perhaps what struck his contemporaries most was his adaptability. For instance, he took up the question of foreign pilots under the Pilotage Bill, and the *Sunday*

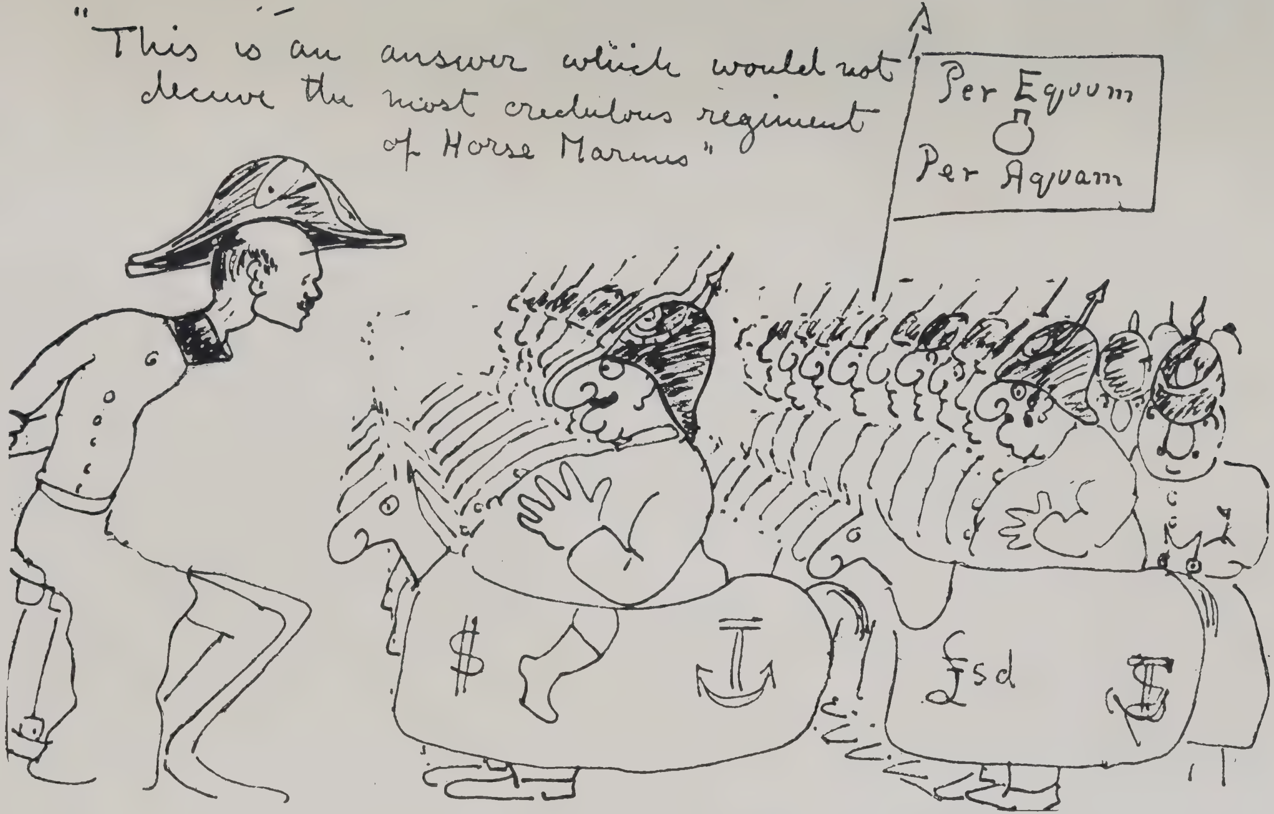
Chronicle wrote (April 20, 1913): "If he should subsequently turn out to be a ship's captain and a doctor of medicine, few will be staggered." The shot was not far wrong, for Mark was able to claim that he and his servants in the East once had to sign on as able seamen to get passage!

The House brought out his sense of caricature, to the growing gaiety of his friends. A dining club founded by Sir Ian Malcolm met on Tuesday nights in succession to the "Hughligans." "One rite was always observed. Before the party broke up Mark Sykes was made to draw a caricature in the club book. These pictures were generally unfaithful history of some recent action attributed to a member of the dining club. Occasionally the drawings were so damaging that the unhappy subject rebelled, and there was a furious attempt to tear the caricature from the book."

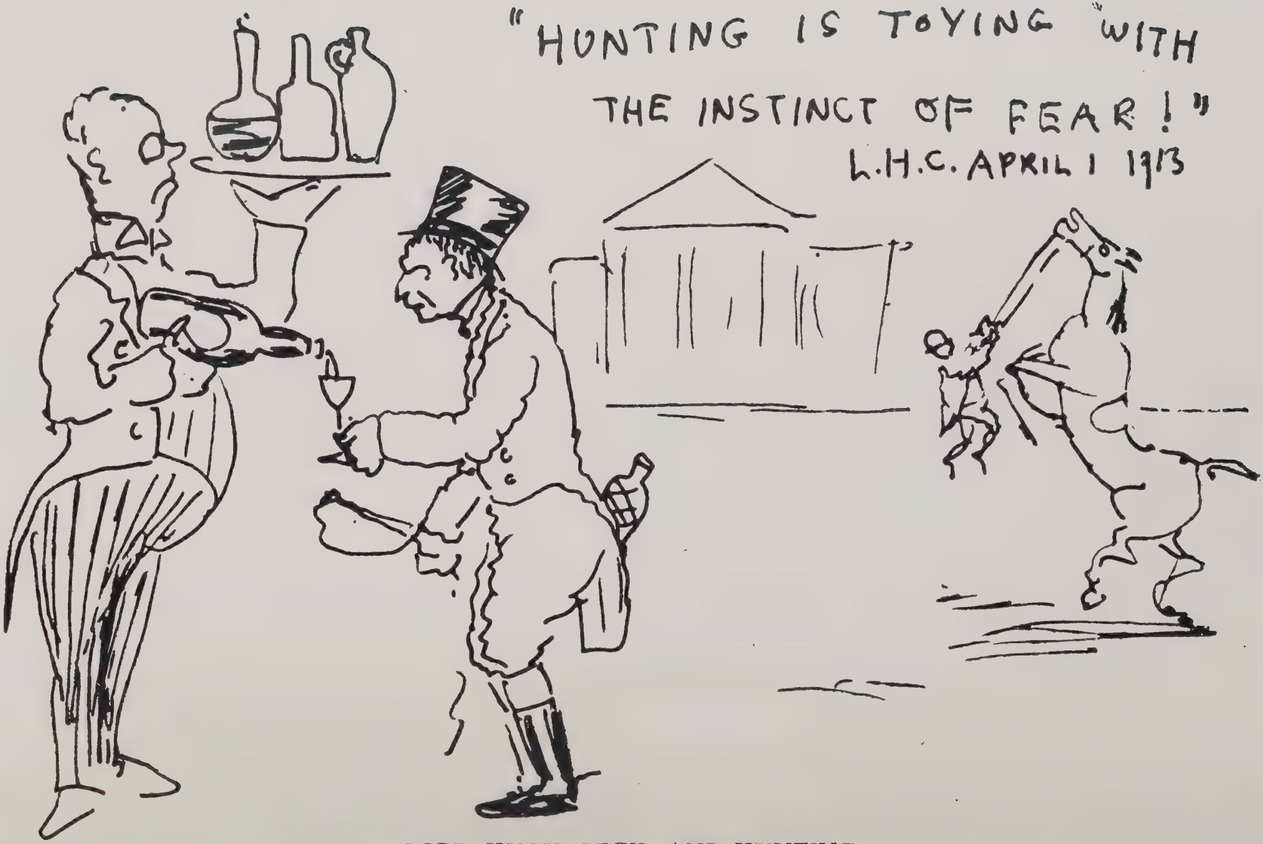
Sir Ian Malcolm recorded that of all the Hughligans "only Hugh Cecil and myself remained in 1911. However, we invited Robert Cecil, Castlereagh, Helmsley, Charlie Mills, Billy Ormsby Gore, Edward Wood, Aubrey Herbert, Willie Bridgeman, Wolmer and Mark to join us. In some way these dinners eclipsed the earlier ones, at one of which Mr. Chamberlain had asked if we had a motto, and was informed that it was 'Parsimony, Purity, and the Persian Gulf,' to which he replied that he would have imagined it to be 'Pushfulness, Personalities, and the Press!' This time the members were linked by no engagement to act together politically, but only to observe with free masonic fidelity the astonishing confidences that were exchanged at our weekly feasts in the Palace of Truth. Quick as lightning to illustrate a mood or a *mot*, Mark would grab at the book and, pushing his plate on one side with a sniff and a chuckle, draw forth his fountain-pen and bend double over the page until his caricature was completed. We rarely knew what it was that had tickled his fancy so suddenly until the book was passed round, and we were convulsed with laughter at our artist's conception of the passing jest of the moment."

The book of caricatures is one which will share with the sketches of F. C. Gould and E. T. Reed the task of preserving the grotesquer and lighter memory of Parliaments and Parliamentarians who would otherwise fall into humourless history or happy oblivion.

Lord Hugh Cecil was a subject of several masterpieces. For instance, a picture of the noble lord receiving a stimulant before mounting a rearing horse, under his words, "Hunting is toying with the instinct of fear," or reviewing a troop of Horse Marines in development of his words, "This is a statement which would not deceive the most credulous regiment of Horse Marines." Or the fabulous scene when Lord Hugh's icon is paraded by the Soldiers' and Workers' delegates to Oxford University. And the famous war scenes, when Lord Hugh, descended from a crashed aeroplane, remarking, "This is not a good landing; in fact, Mr. Speaker, I should not be going too far


"This is an answer which would not deceive the most credulous regiment of Horse Marines"
Per Equum
Per Aquam
$
£sd

LORD HUGH CECIL AND THE HORSE MARINES.


"HUNTING IS TOYING WITH
THE INSTINCT OF FEAR!"
L.H.C. APRIL 1 1913

LORD HUGH CECIL AND HUNTING.

if I said it is the worst landing ever made in this or any other aerodrome!" or tried on cardboard nose and gaberdine in testimony of his solemn statement, "I have long been a Zionist"!

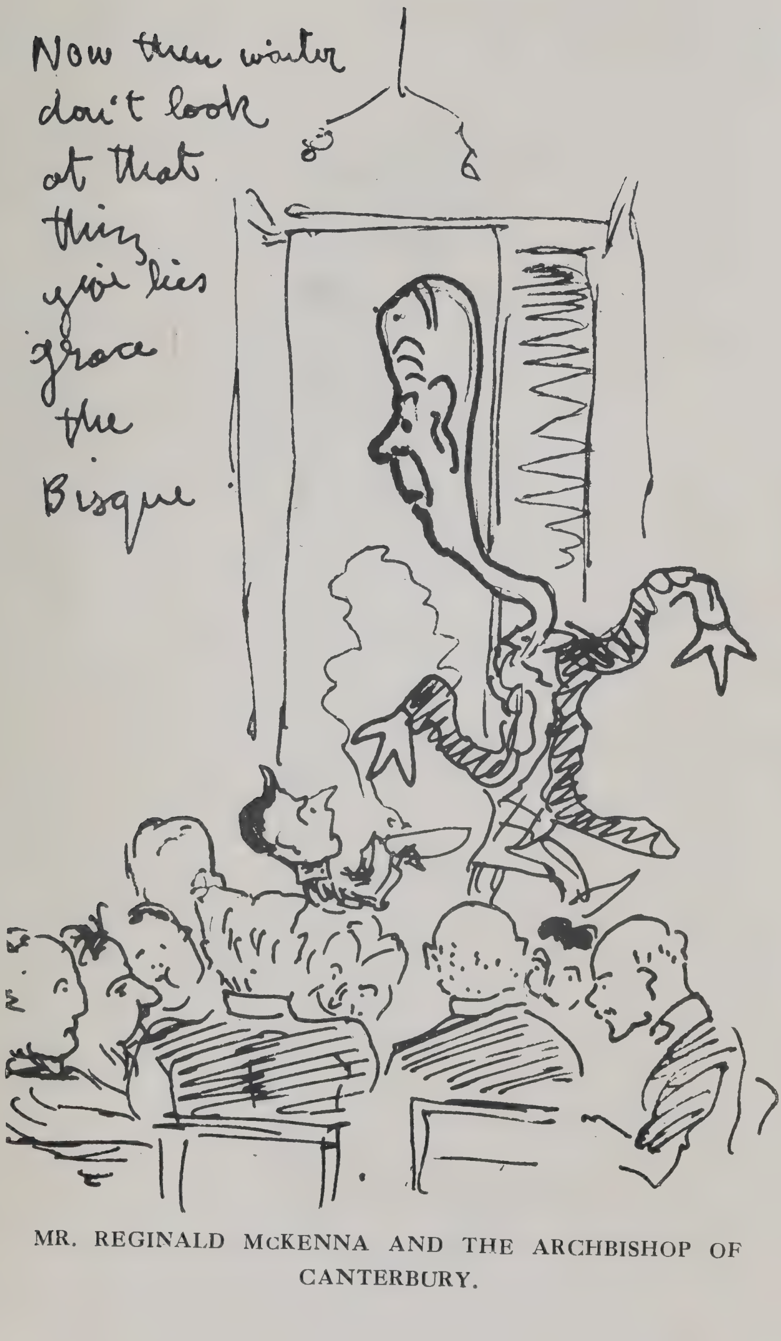
Lord Castlereagh made a graceful subject of caricature as the *grand seigneur*, always in correct eighteenth century costume. In his absence he was caricatured privately making his peace with John Redmond, and saying, "Now tell me, John, if I do vote for the Bill will you forgive and forget?" Also being tempted by Lloyd George: "Now look you, if you will betray the Covenant I'll give you a Garter, if you'll vote against Bonar I'll make you a Duke, if you'll hold your tongue about you know what I'll give you a million." Spotless peer replies, "Never!" Finally, after the passing of Home Rule, the viscount mounts an Irish scaffold, the last of the aristocrats.

Aubrey Herbert fell perpetually under Mark's pencil. He had once made a luncheon with Mr. Balfour an excuse for not dining with the club! and a very libellous caricature was inserted in the book, but the drawing of "Tancred Coningsby Herbert throwing in his lot with Young England!" more than made amends. "Aubrey's First Night with the Club" is another imaginary scene best left behind discreet covers.

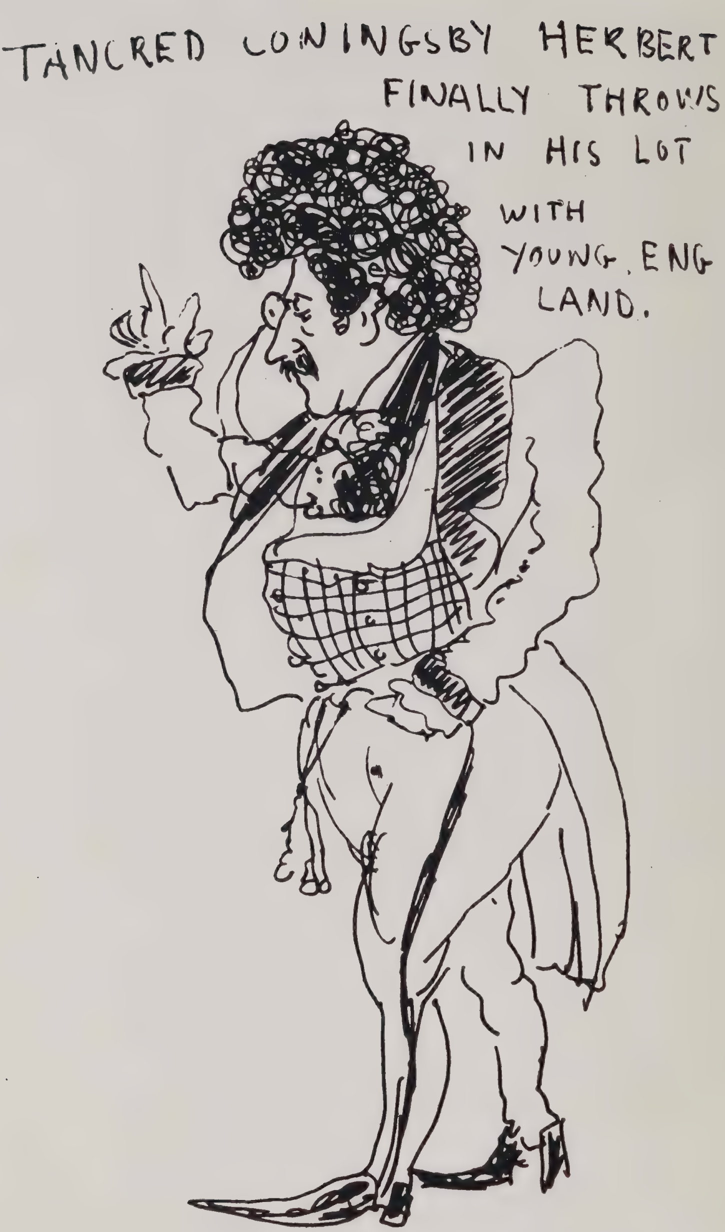
Lord Curzon appears as a crossing-sweeper saying, "Kind friends, pity me, I was a Viceroy once," or interviewing his Assistant Secretary of State as follows, "Now, Mr. Assistant Secretary, what have you to tell us?" and receiving the satisfactory reply, "Nothing, my lord, unless it is your lordship's pleasure that I should remind the committee how right your lordship was when your lordship explained how rash was the proposal of the Under-Secretary, my lord!"

There was an amusing paraphrase in illustration of Mr. Asquith's casuistic speech on the Marconi incident, of Guy Faux being tried by James the First, who remarks, "My lords and gentlemen, Mr. Faux tells us that his mind was so fully occupied with his own affairs that it never occurred to him to inform the Speaker, particularly as the whole matter was bound to come out upstairs sooner or later; consequently, there can be no question of intentional concealment of explosives!" In connection with the same rather trivial incident Sir Rufus Isaacs and Mr. Lloyd George are represented as two mashers who, lifting their wine-glasses, arrive amongst taper-holding monks over the legend, "Ye Chaunceloure ande ye Attorneye come untoe ye inner Santuarie there to doe amende deshonorable."

As political times waxed furious the humour of the club increased. In June, 1913, the members were represented in the various rôles they were expected to take up when the Irish crisis burst, and in July they kindly, or ironically, celebrated the third reading of Welsh Disestablishment by entertaining the Archbishop of Canterbury. By unforeseen accident the well-known Liberal Minister, Mr. McKenna, looked in, and a member of the club was represented saying,


Now then waiter don't look at that thing give his grace the Bisque

MR. REGINALD McKENNA AND THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.


TANCRED CONINGSBY HERBERT
FINALLY THROWS
IN HIS LOT
WITH
YOUNG ENG
LAND.

THE APOTHEOSIS OF AUBREY HERBERT.

"Now then, waiter, don't look at that thing. Give his Grace the bisque!"

Another humorous incident showed a distracted waitress in the House complaining to the Kitchen Committee of the conduct of a Welsh Member.

Mr. Balfour was represented listening to Lord Robert Cecil saying "I am afraid this is a very dull speech" and commenting "Hear! hear!" or descending into a cellar during an air-raid, where he found the servants knitting, which did not prevent him "paying tribute to the occasion." Lord Robert Cecil appears canvassing a member of the middle classes for his vote and insisting, "Now, your wife and child are avaricious, unpatriotic, mean and cruel and generally contemptible. I beg to solicit your vote, of which I am certain, because among your other demerits you are a snob!"

The last reunion was held to bid George Lloyd (not to be confused with his counterchange in name) farewell on his departure to Bombay, and the night's caricature (October 29, 1918) showed Mr. Jowett succeeding him in the future as Socialist Governor, amid the surrender of the Anglo-Indians.

When Chequers was presented to the nation as a permanent abode for the passing Premier, Mark drew up and illustrated certain rules of future conduct, such as:

"Prime Ministers' eldest sons alone shall have the right to carve the names of their fiancées on the grand staircase.

"The Minister in residence is to be personally responsible for any moral or intellectual damage which may result from the action of himself or his guests.

"An English country gentleman is to be kept on the premises for the entertainment of the resident Minister and to give tone to the establishment.

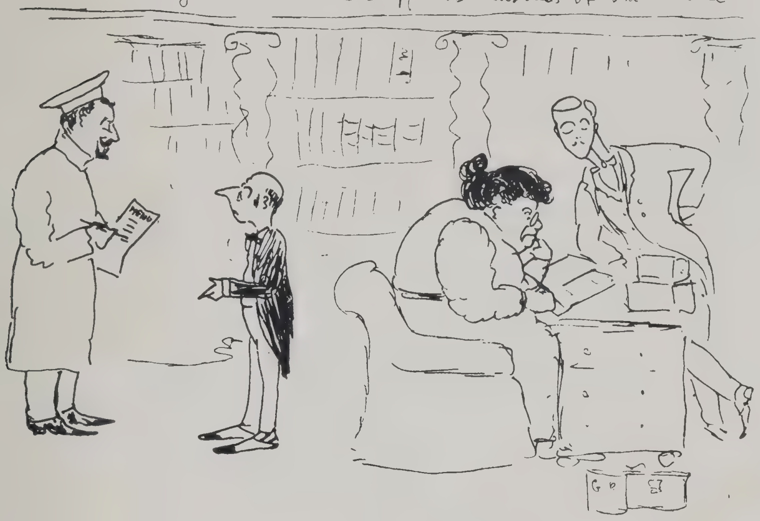
"In event of the Prime Minister being a woman, the Prime Minister's husband will be regarded by the domestic staff as mistress of the house.

"In event of a Prime Minister being engaged in conference with a member of his Cabinet who is of the opposite sex, members of the domestic staff will knock twice before entering the room.

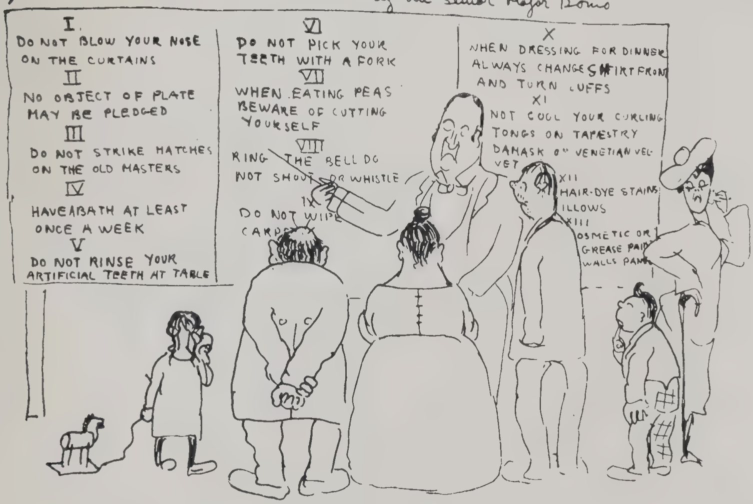
"Gentlemen, guests of the resident Minister, will be required to wear evening dress at dinner. In order that the artistic unities may be preserved, they will be inspected by the President of the Royal Academy, who, on behalf of the Trustees, will decide whether their appearance is in harmony with the traditions and surroundings of the Ministerial residence."

The complete set of illustrations may be imagined from the two here reproduced.

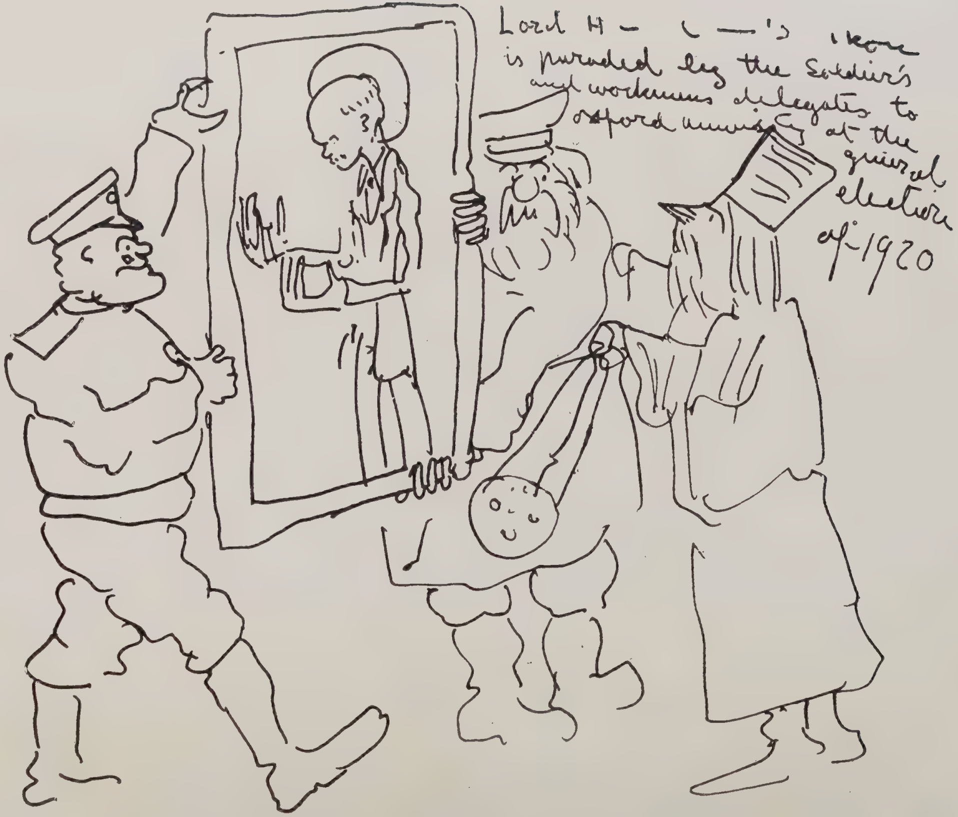
Rule V In event of the Prime Minister being a woman the Prime minister's husband will be regarded by the domestic staff as mistress of the house



Rule VIII Before a prime minister is inducted into the ministerial residence, both he and his family will have certain matters regarding deportment and conduct explained to them by the Senior Major Domo


I.
DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE ON THE CURTAINS
II
NO OBJECT OF PLATE MAY BE PLEDGED
III
DO NOT STRIKE MATCHES ON THE OLD MASTERS
IV
HAVE A BATH AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK
V
DO NOT RINSE YOUR ARTIFICIAL TEETH AT TABLE
VI
DO NOT PICK YOUR TEETH WITH A FORK
VII
WHEN EATING PEAS BEWARE OF CUTTING YOURSELF
VIII
RING THE BELL DO NOT SHOUT OR WHISTLE
IX
DO NOT WIPE CARP
X
WHEN DRESSING FOR DINNER ALWAYS CHANGE SHIRT FRONT AND TURN CUFFS
XI
NOT COOL YOUR CURLING TONGS ON TAPESTRY DAMASK OR VENETIAN VELVET
XII
HAIR-DYE STAINS ILLOWS
XIII
OSMETIC OR GREASE PAI WALLS PAN

SOME OF THE RULES FOR "CHEQUERS."


Lord H— C—'s ikon is paraded by the Soldier's and workmens delegates to Oxford university at the general election of 1920

LORD HUGH CECIL'S IKON AT OXFORD.

CHAPTER X

THE GREAT WAR

MARK was not unprepared for the Great War. His bent of mind, his training, his travels had made him one of the expectant few amongst the apathetic many. At Hull on December 16, 1913, he warned his audience that never had he seen the "foreign situation more menacing." The assassination of the Archduke alarmed him. "One of the important factors of the European situation is gone. Supposing, for instance, the Cato Street Conspiracy had been a success and the King killed, what would have happened in England if this had come off before the Reform Bill?" On June 29, 1914, he was speaking in the House on the Persian Gulf and quoting the Duke of Wellington's famous words on the danger of a victory in Asia. The Ottoman break-up would produce a German frontier in Mesopotamia, a Persian break-up a Russian frontier. "Great Britain will then be like a stranded whale on a mud-bank with a river hippopotamus charging down."

At the end of July he went to Wales for training, and a few days later was mobilized. He took his Yorkshire battalion to Darlington and Newcastle for training. His Reserve of Wagoners was called up, over a thousand strong, and 800 sent to France. In

September Mark slipped over to see them. In November he equipped a hospital at St. Malo les Bains, in charge of Lady Sykes. Before the end of the year Lord Kitchener placed him on the General Staff for Eastern service, where matters had been as hinted in a letter from Winston Churchill (September 26, 1914): "Very many thanks; but I hope we shall avoid a rupture with Turkey, though the situation is not good with those people."

Mark had been something between a stormy petrel and a prophet with regard to Mesopotamia, "a zone," he told the R.G.S. in 1907, "which to-morrow may engross the whole attention of Europe." And, again, of the Near East:

May 10, 1912.

The world that lies between London and Calcutta is of infinite interest to the English. In war or in peace our communications must run across that region by land, sea or canal.

Into this region Mark was to be intermittently plunged for the next four years. Kitchener's secretary sent him a hint as to Egypt, and Mark wrote from camp to Aubrey Herbert:

Fitzgerald told me he had sent my name with two others to Maxwell as possible special service officers. Obviously George Bowles and you were the other two. Pompey and Crassus both suitably disposed of, the way opens for conquering Cæsar's mighty tread! Crassus is with the yeomanry. Pompey lies sick. Hallo! This won't do! The real Crassus got a regrettable incident in North Mesopotamia. Change the conversation. Antwerp will put two pounds in Enver's scale and may tip the beam. We shall rue our delay if we get into a war with Turkey now. We have given the devils too long to prepare, and the Germans too long to intrigue. I have been preparing pamphlets of a seditious kind for Syria. There is one confounded fly in the ointment of peroration. And therefore: "O ye Arabs, plump for Russia and France who ye know are sweet even as honey, who never, never say boo to a Moslem goose." Bonar Law must be made Leader of the Progressive Party on the Belfast Municipal Council. Asquith must be tried by court-martial for breaking his word, and acquitted for having risked his immortal soul for the good of the country. You are happy, for have not the Portuguese Revolutionaries sided with us? Go out and be another Beresford and lead the forlorn hope on the German left flank, as the angels of Death with golden beards surge down upon Bordeaux!

At the same time he was writing serious letters of propaganda to a Mr. George Sykes, of Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A., in which he dealt with the issues and results of the war fairly and intelligently compared to the aggravating slush which tended to keep America so long out of the war:

It means a new era, it means that the American Constitution, the French Revolution, the Reform Acts in England were wrong, were a mere blind alley, and democracy would have to admit the principle that the militarily efficient few could rightly or wrongly coerce the undrilled many.

Shaw, Norman Angell, suppers at the Ritz, the Russian ballet, the House of Commons debates, and all those frivolities are like last year's artificial flowers.

Some of my best friends are dead and maimed, many must follow—yet each death gives life to the nation, each wound vigour to the State.

I have no easy optimistic view that this is the end of war and fighting, that the world will be ruled by treaties and conferences; but this I do believe—men or the generation of men who survive this time will be able to meet great occasions and crises with larger and more just views.

> To read our papers you would imagine that our troops were marching on Berlin at the rate of twenty-five miles a day, and that such Germans as had not cut their throats were seeking refuge in insane asylums.
>
> A decadent oligarchy in Prussia and a sort of somnambulist democracy with an inspired impresario as an Emperor are a dangerous combination.
>
> Now Mr. Wilson is not only doing a foolish thing but a wrong thing; he should be drilling, mobilising, training. I don't say this because I look to the U.S.A. for help, but because I know what your God-forsaken schoolmaster—alas! the word is out, I'll apologize. I say I know what Mr. Wilson does not know, and that is that the whole world after this war is going to be a very plain-spoken, rough-edged place. We are going to win this war, we are going to punish the guilty; that means perhaps a two years' war, or a five years' or seven years' war, and it means that Prussian militarism is going to be crushed, and in *crushing it we shall have to become a part of it.*

And, until America came in, Mark always alluded rather hopelessly to Wilson as " a Primitive Methodist 4,000 miles away."

His first offer for service was a position on Maxwell's staff in Egypt, as he wrote to his wife:

> Bethune said to me: " You can take this if you like, but remember your battalion! " Oh, if it had only been an order! What could I do? A battalion is like one's child. One must on choice choose the thing one is responsible for. Please say I did the right thing.

It was not long before Kitchener detailed him for Eastern affairs, on which his mind had never ceased to run. There was real wisdom in a letter Mark wrote to Noel Buxton, M.P.:

February 10, 1915.

The key lies in Sofia and Sofia alone. Time is not on our side in this instance. If spring comes upon us and finds the same deadlock, no one will move till harvest, and after harvest there is always the probability of people holding their hands again until another winter has passed. Of course we can wear Germany down, but a war of exhaustion is very deadly even to the winners. In anything you may desire to do, I hope you will believe that I have now no prejudices as regards Balkan States. The Committee of Union and Progress has made an end of the Ottoman Empire as far as we are concerned. The war has completely transformed our strategic position in the East and in the world. My idea always was that by preserving the Ottoman Empire in Asia the Great War might be averted, but that part having failed there is an end to it. Now you represent, though you do not realize it, the great Gladstonian tradition in the Balkans; your name means much, and I hope you will not be too retiring and continue to work on. The French have their eyes fixed on their own territory. The Russians have not too good relations with the Bulgars. For those reasons I believe that any real policy in the Balkans must rest with us. What do the Bulgars require? The lost provinces—and what more? I believe Bulgar help would be worth millions. Could we relieve them of their debt?

On June 1, 1915, Mark, with his secretary Walter Wilson, started for the East. At Marseilles he missed Izzet Pasha, but found an old servant amongst the Tunisian troops and noted the importance of bringing them into touch with Indian Moslems. Italy was in the glow of mobilization. From the lack of votive candles before shrines he judged that the Sicilians were not anxious. At Athens he saw Sir Francis Elliot and discussed with Serafimow, lately Dragoman to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, the plan of making the Caliphate open to election like the Papacy, with

Damascus or a part of Constantinople as a Vatican. He interviewed Prince Sabah-ed-Din as to a military revolution in Smyrna. The Prince suggested Lebanon for France, Basra for England and the Sherif of Mecca taking the Sultan's place in the Caliphate. Mark went on to Sofia and Salonica, where he met the only person who had any interest in maintaining the Ottoman Empire, "his name is Fitzmaurice." Once Turkey ceased as a military entity, "her only value would be that of an apple of discord to split the Allies." Fitzmaurice realized that "genius plus mediæval chivalry in the twentieth century has a rough path to hew." Mark caught hints to recant his old Armenian views and not to take the obvious forecast of the futures of Russia and Turkey. From Dedeagatch Mark proceeded by destroyer to the headquarters of Sir Ian Hamilton, to whom he explained the schemes of Sir Maurice de Bunsen's committee on Asiatic Turkey. He wrote to his wife at intervals:

June 10, 1915.

At Marseilles I said some prayers at *Notre Dame de la Garde* and heard Mass. I saw the Indian base and the drafts for the front. I was not impressed by the native soldiers; they looked sulky and very black, though there was a very nice old native officer. I stopped at Nice for two hours, but I am glad to say Izzet was away in Switzerland, probably messing about the ex-Khedive. French Riviera very deserted, though I hear Monte Carlo is full and much gambling at the tables. Once in Italy it was very interesting.

At Naples much enthusiasm and, I fear, want of appreciation of what war means. I went to Pompeii, which was very interesting owing to the immense extension of the excavations. I saw, too, the new houses which have been left with all the things in them. In one are the bodies of the family, a man, two women and a child, all huddled in a side room. So to Catania across the Messina Straits, where there seemed to me a lamentable want of precaution against submarine. On to Syracuse, where I found myself in odd company at the hotel. The keeper, an Austrian, the constant guest a civilian agent of the German traders, a German female typist and occasional visitors, two German captains of ships which have put in there in early days—in fact as nice a nest of spies as ever was made—the British Vice-Consul, an amiable loquacious person, who certainly seemed to think that the war was a passing event and that Germans did not much matter.

Thence back to Salonica, Athens and to Cairo. He wrote from Salonica:

July 1, 1915.

Everything I have done is so secret (horribly so); I can't tell you one thing without another. Fitzmaurice is wonderful, and may be assassinated any moment. One dines alongside Germans and Comitagis everywhere in Greece and Bulgaria. There are getting to be too many Red Cross parties in Serbia.

July 4, 1915.

I have been shadowed by spies since Syracuse, and have lived among Germans all the time. Fitzmaurice lives between two Germans at Sofia, and they listen at the doors on each side. The Turks, under German tuition, are committing outrages they never thought of before. They dug up the dead Russians at St. Stefano who were buried during the war, and by German order paraded the skulls round Constantinople. It was great fun on the destroyer going across; the cannonading was not so ear-splitting as I should have expected it, two miles my nearest to it. Submarines have great moral effect, and at least one compensation, devices for saving life at sea are being much improved. I get more and more confidence as I find how prayers are answered.

Mind and always pray hard to Our Lady. I am already twenty days behind my scheduled time, but for good reason.

All the time Mark was writing illuminating and impassioned dispatches home. Off Crete he summed up the Young Turks as " a band of adventurers of mean origin, no restraining beliefs or superstition, who have for ten years lived amid exciting and successful intrigue, ready to risk their country to save themselves. Constantinople, the Caliphate, the Ottoman Army, the Gallipoli Peninsula are so many counters in their game which, if lost, will bring no sentimental regrets." To the Old Turks Constantinople was still " the great prize wrested from Christendom, the sole title of Turks to be considered of any importance either in Europe or Asia." The Turkish soldier he described as one who, " so long as he is fed may be trusted to fight, but does not expect to win."

In Bulgaria he noted that the sentiment for Gladstone was countered by dread of Russia. He compared Greek officers listening to Venizelos " to an English party politician listening to one advocating a policy which he dreads and dislikes." To bring Bulgaria into the Allied camp he suggested occupying " the coveted portion of Eastern Macedonia " for them and keeping the fact an open secret. From Cairo he reported an interview with the Khedive, who was anxious to improve his position by including Syria in the Egyptian Government, but by invitation of the Syrians, instead of " being the bearer of an imaginary title in the eyes of his subjects." He found Anglo-French rivalry exploited in Cairo as Anglo-Russian was in Constantinople. The sapient Syrians seemed to dread equally French exploitation and Ottoman oppression. He interviewed the editor of the *Mokattam* and " a Tashnakist editor " who held " a high position of an occult kind." From a member of the Al Azhar University he gathered that a Kurdish state was impossible, that until the Ottoman dynasty became simple Amirs of Anatolia and relinquished the Caliphate there could be no peace. Irak and Damascus could become a Sultanate under the Sherif of Mecca and European protection. In sharp contradiction he found Sheikh Reshid, a Pan-Islamic leader, made arrogant by England's desire to soothe Moslem prejudices. Mark reminded Reshid that the Young Turks massacred the Khojas and Ulema, Moslem parsons. He replied that Turkey represented Mohammedan independence. Mark prophesied Moslem discontent in Egypt and India whatever happened. " It is important that Great Britain and France should come to some understanding as soon as possible with regard to Syria. From what I heard of M. Picot's mission I believe that the French will give up the coast to the south of Akka. This indeed is essential to our position in Mesopotamia." He proposed the independence of the Sherif and that France should forego her rights in Syria for compensation elsewhere. To his wife he was writing :

July 17, 1915.

I have had a singular adventure. I, Walter and Lieut. Albina were arrested as spies by an Egyptian Mulazim, who was abominably rude; we were shut up in a police station—seldom have I been more furious—and we were kept for an hour. When the British officer in command came, the Mulazim had fled like the Egyptian he was. I have seen several persons in Cairo, one a holy man of the foulest and most unctuous kind and the other a perfect dear of a Kurd of the Al Azhar, who said this war is from God as a punishment for every one's sin, and you English will suffer much because of your sins, but you will win because your sins are less.

July 21, 1915.

A thousand congratulations on address c/o *British Consul, Aden!* It has not come to that yet, or is it that you are unaware that Aden was ever British? Well, I just came in for the last shots of the "battle," which was admirably done from all points of view. I'll tell you how later when we meet. Aden is as near like Hell as any place on earth, but is inhabited by Arabs, both male and female, with the most beautiful limbs and bodies imaginable; they are like Greek statues with the heads of Rameses the Second.

HALF-WAY TO ADEN.
August 9, 1915.

Back to the broiling again—temperature 102.3? I am now travelling with one of the Jerusalem Dominican "*Pères*" as my colleague; he is an hon. capt. in the British Army and in charge of the N. Red Sea Patrols. He is Père Janssen, who used to explore Northern Arabia.

At Aden Mark conferred with Sir George Younghusband and interviewed prisoners. The Syrians were only fearful of being handed back to the Ottomans, but the Moslem Arabs showed distinct fanaticism. He gathered that "a moribund Caliphate in an atrophied Turkey would have fewer potentialities of danger than a Caliphate situated in Arabia, where the vital spark of Islam survives." Owing to the Cairo influence on the Pan-Arab movement, Mark wished Aden transferred to the Egyptian command in spite of the Indian point of view and "the question of the Indian pilgrimage, the connection of Hadramaut with Haiderabad."

Returning to Cairo, Mark drew up an intellectual analysis of Islam in transition between the influences of the ancient past and of the modern Occident. He divided Moslems into Ancients and Moderns, while pointing out that "the Young Turks' ideas are in no wise different from those of the Janissaries of the fifteenth century, while the turbaned philosopher would readily appreciate the theories of Tolstoi and Shaw." The Ancient Moslems he divided into: Class I (anti-Christian bigots), Class II (tolerant and scrupulous), Class III (unorthodox mystics). The Moderns he divided into Class I (agnostics), who were Western in culture, but not able to assimilate Nationalism. "To a Moslem, be he Syrian, Egyptian or Turk, this is literally impossible. There is nothing real, conscious or subconscious, which responds to the call of Nationalism." Class II consisted of the half-educated who apply "a European Jacobinism to Sunni Mohammedanism." In office their methods are those of the French Commune; out of office, those of Ravachol. He recommended Arab rivalry against Turkish dominion, and put his greatest hope in Class II of the Ancients. He advised concession, however unpalatable. "If by wise and tactful methods we can increase its power and obtain its active support, much will be done to ensure the peace not only of our own borders, but of mankind." On

Mark's proposals the Allied policy in the Middle East with its pro-Arab leaning was largely based. Mark's concentrated knowledge may be thus figured:

MOSLEMS

Ancient

	Class I	*Class II*	*Class III*
Egypt	Hostile	Benevolent apathy	Mild approval
Senussi	Between the two classes		
Syria	Violent anti-Christian	Favourably disposed	
Constantinople	Non-existent	Benevolently negative	
Irak	To be reckoned with	Potential for order. Under Persian influence	
Arabia	Hostile and pan-Arab		

Modern

	Class I	*Class II*
Egypt	Constitutional	Unforgiving enmity
Senussi	Tending to Class II	
Syria	Favourable	Rare, owing to missionary Colleges
Constantinople		Pro-German
Irak	Europeanised Bagdadis	

In Cairo Mark had two interviews with Zagloul Pasha, the leader of the constitutional opposition, also with the secretary of the Al Azhar University, who pointed out the demoralizing effect of English Universities on Moslems. A French representative told him France must have Damascus. With Père Janssen he set out for Aden again, and India. He learnt from the worthy Dominican that agreement with France and an independent Arabia were necessities to English communication between Egypt and Mesopotamia. "It is especially important that our penetration should be rather as a friendly than a hostile Power. However, to achieve this we must have a clear understanding with France."

The part the French Dominicans took in influencing the Arabs on the Allies' side was small, but Mark fully realized their value. A typically well-informed telegram of his to Egypt reads: "According to Doughty's 'Arabia Deserta,' Sherif's personal levy composed of Gallas, Moors and negroes are popularly called Ageyl. This may explain presence of Ageyl patrols S. of Akaba. Consult Janssen."

Mark's mind was moving on the lines of Arab revolt and Meccan independence. During 1915 the Sherif, now King, Hussein was angling for British recognition. The French unfortunately opposed Arab hegemony and it fell to Mark to show himself equally pro-Arab and pro-French. How difficult a task this was is shown by the fact that the British Government did not communicate the Sykes-Picot agreement to the Arabs, who learnt its terms later from the Bolshevists.

Mark reached India on August 14, and discussed the problems of Baghdad and Kut el Amara with the Viceroy, especially the area between Mosul and

Baghdad. He visited the prisoners of war, and catalogued them carefully. September 19 found him at Basra. Meantime he was writing to his wife from Simla:

September 3, 1915.

I have had great fun here. I stayed with Maharajah Bikanir, and to my delight find Indians live on excellent Pilaff and Yaghourt; English people prefer tinned salmon and condensed milk.

At the prisoners' camp there were Khojas and Mutessarifs and Bombashis and Bedawi and Cadhis and Muftis, and Effendis, Syrians, Armenians, Greeks, Kurds, Circassians, etc., and the rule was—if they talked Arabic they were to be fed on curry made of vegetables. If they talked Turkish they were to be treated as Europeans. You may imagine how pleased the pro-English Syrians were and how the Turks smiled at our wise policy. At the prisoners' camp the native still have bows and arrows, so it's pretty out of the way.

September 9, 1915.

Well, India is very strange. The Anglo-Indian of low degree is accustomed to travel with loads of servants, bedding, etc., and expects all men to don evening-dress on all occasions, which is disconcerting if one only has a clean uniform.

The hours of labour are also not convenient for anyone in a hurry:

6.30.—Breakfast—ride, swim, sleep, idle.
9.30.—Breakfast.
10.45.—Go to office.
12.30.—Break off for Tiffin.
1.30.—Tiffin.
2.30 to 4.30.—Sleep, I think.
4.30 to 6.30.—Go about.
6.30 to 8.0.—Hang about club.
8.0.—Dress for dinner.
9.0.—Dinner.

I was happier staying with Bikanir. That was really interesting. I found a doctor there who had spent fifteen years in Persia, and he said: "If only people came to India overland they'd understand things they never will understand."

The old palace at Bikanir is very fine, of all ages with many treasures, and being Rajput has many strange pagan remains. The day I was there the "ladies of the town" sent a deputation to worship his throne, it being the feast day of Devi or Venus; that sounds almost like Nineveh. The Palace at Delhi is a splendid ruin, marred by frightful barracks built by the British. It is a shock to find that Indian towns like Delhi have made obviously less progress in the last thirty years than, say, Konia or Kastamuni; this is a real blow to my ideas. Putting deliberate misdoing such as massacres and assassinations aside, the Turkish Dowla is more like a Dowla and less Oriental than our show in India. Of course, India is poor, over-populated and understaffed, but at root the secret of Turkish influence over Hindu Moslems who have been to Stambul is that they have seen there something externally more efficient than they see at home.

KUT EL AMARA,
October 1, 1915.

You will see by the map where I am. As for news, you will have to wait until you see me. I saw a certain amount of the show. This is a most extraordinary campaign.

His impressions appeared in the *Observer:* "The Turks had fled in haste. Our men, both horse and foot, reached the town soon after they had gone. The last week the Turkish commander had been maintaining his prestige by daily hangings. Enter the victors. Within an hour the women were chaffering milk, dates and sweet limes, the merchants were offering contracts. Arab cultivators were dropping in to complain of a certain horseman who had ridden through a crop of beans. In lieu of the *furor teutonicus* a kind of *juris obsessio*."

Mark was at enormous pains to decipher the feelings of the different types of prisoners. Georgian Armenians, for instance, were ready to serve with the Russians, and Arab officers showed Anglophobism. He interviewed a Turkish officer who was opposed to the Young Turk régime and realised that "no Turk would contribute to the fall of Constantinople." The Anatolians, who were the backbone of the Turkish Army, appeared to regard Enver as having led Turkey to disaster. He began to collect the strings of Moslem opinion as they ramified between India and Egypt and Arabia. He advised on the delicate question of Shia shrines. "I believe the moment has now come when His Majesty's Government might profitably consider the future attitude of Great Britain towards Arab peoples within area of British interest. At present impossible to ascertain inclinations or desires of people without risking raising false hopes. Our policy should be to protect Arabia as a whole from without, leaving each situation to develop on its own lines from within, though it may be preferable to regard the Sherif of Mecca, if he assume the Caliphate, as an ally rather than a protégé like the Shaykh of Koweyt."

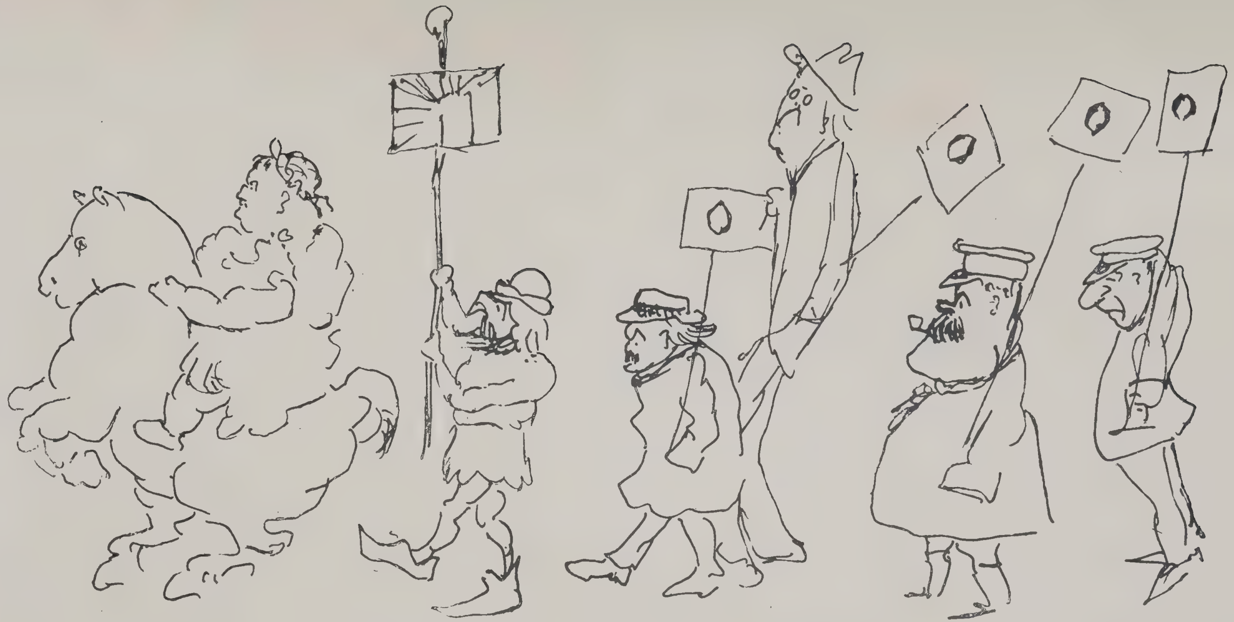
Mark and Colonel Lawrence had the same idea of getting the Arab to revolt against the Turk, only Lawrence disliked the considerable favour which Mark thought ought to be shown to the ambitions of France in the East. Lord Hardinge and the Indian Government were telegraphing, from the natural point of view of their multitudinous Mohammedan subjects, in strong disparagement of any plan to dismember and upset the Ottoman Empire. But Mark's Arabian views prevailed at the Foreign Office against the Indian Government. Meantime in the Middle East it was as Mark wrote in one of his books: "All Syria welcomed Aurelian as it has welcomed Alexander and as it would welcome England, France or Germany to-day. The Syrian Arab has long had the knack of falling in with the plans of a successful conqueror."

In December Mark returned to England, and was instructed to use his accumulated experience to draw up an arrangement with a French representative concerning Syria, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. Mark's hobby had become a serious consideration in the war. He was placed with Miss Gertrude Bell, Colonel Lawrence and Dr. Doughty among the half-dozen English folk who in different ways knew the Near East. When Mark and Lord Robert Cecil entered the Foreign Office it was felt that some of the mysterious atmosphere of the Sublime Porte had descended upon stolid English diplomacy. So indispensable did Mark become that Kitchener saw him oftener than many of his generals. The British policy in Syria was largely left to him, though it was on the lines of Sir Maurice de Bunsen's Commission that the Sykes-Picot Treaty was based. Giving Mosul to France, however, was Mark's idea. He remained in close touch with the Foreign Office, and resented the much abused treaty receiving his name, for he only wished to create a French buffer in the Middle East between Russian and British territory. Aubrey Herbert considered it was " not a perfect arrangement in an imperfect world, but it will at least bear a very favourable comparison with the other treaties imposed upon unhappy humanity by the Paris Conference. His agreement was better because it was honest. He was influenced by two principles. His hatred of oppression urged him to do all in his power for the Arabs, the Jews, and the minor nationalities, while his loyalty to our Allies made him feverishly anxious not to betray the trust that the Parisian Press clamorously asserted that France reposed in us."

We add the official version, which has been kindly placed at our disposal by the experts of the Foreign Office:

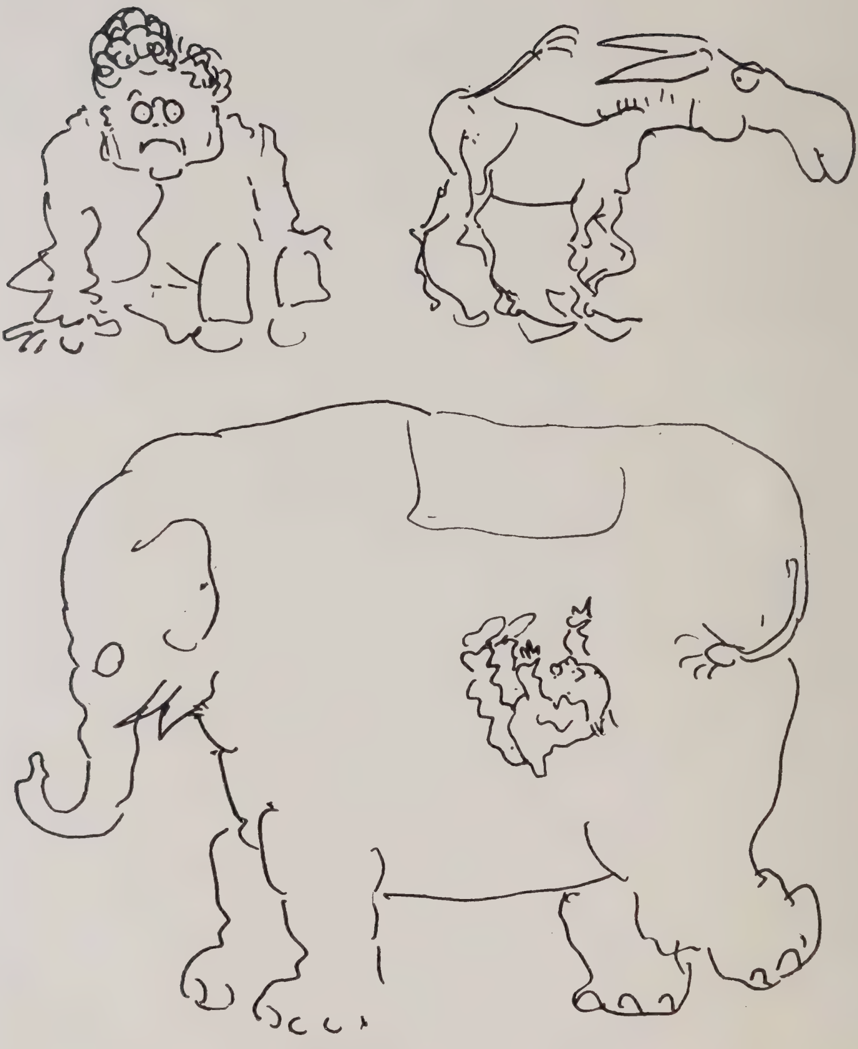
The Arrangement between Great Britain, France and Russia, regarding Syria, Mesopotamia and Eastern Asia Minor, commonly known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement of May, 1916.

> " In every essential part this Arrangement was a war measure forced upon the Allied Powers by the exigencies of the Great War. It would have been an easy matter to formulate ideal solutions of the various Eastern problems which made the Arrangement necessary; but to reach a settlement acceptable to all the Allied States and peoples concerned, and which should yet retain ideal solutions, or even any large part of such solutions, was beyond the possibility of attainment. Allied



AFTER A WAR CONFERENCE AT PARIS.

Result : Sykes first ! Lloyd George, Balfour, Robertson, Jellicoe nowhere.



A DIFFERENCE IN FALLS:

Birrell's from a donkey compared to L. G.'s from an elephant.

unity was at stake. That the Arrangement, in spite of grave and inevitable defects, carried the Allies over a difficult period cannot be denied.

" The Sykes-Picot Agreement, popularly called thus after the names of the British and French representatives who negotiated the Arrangement, has been the subject of much hostile and uninformed criticism. It was essentially a secret pact. In the nature of things its terms and antecedent conditions could not have been divulged at the time without serious prejudice to the Allied cause. It dealt with matters of high importance to which secrecy was as vital as to a plan of campaign. Neither excuse nor extenuation need be urged in defence of the secrecy maintained for more than a year and a half regarding its provisions and even its existence.

" But this secrecy came untowardly to an end with the accession to power of the Russian Bolsheviks. Anxious to discredit alike the overthrown Tsarist Government and the so-called capitalist Governments of the Western Powers, Lenin and Trotsky published the Sykes-Picot papers and other secret treaties then in the archives of Imperial Russia. The publicity so given was, however, only partial. It provided no information upon the circumstances under which, at least on the part of Great Britain, the Arrangement had become an imperative necessity. Criticism therefore, ignorant of the conditioning facts, saw only the terms of the completed agreement, saw only its secrecy, its apparent haste to apportion among the Allies territory not yet in their power, its alleged indifference to the rights of native inhabitants, its seemingly doubtful treatment of the Arab Allies of Great Britain. It became a commonplace of certain sections of the Press that the Sykes-Picot Agreement was 'iniquitous,' 'unjust,' 'nefarious,' and an outstanding example of the methods of the 'old and evil diplomacy.'

"It may be remarked here that the late Sir Mark Sykes himself was fully conscious of the shortcoming of the Arrangement. But though an ardent friend and well-wisher of the Arab cause, he regarded it as containing the best solution of Arab questions which circumstances at the time permitted. It may be remarked, further, that he always took exception to his name being appropriated to the popular title of the Agreement. It was a matter, he said, in which a free hand was impossible; he had been compelled by controlling facts to do only what could be done in a strictly circumscribed situation. In his view the Arrangement was one of imperative expediency between Great Britain, France and Russia, and the linking of his name with it he considered an implication of authorship of its conditions which he desired to be spared.

"The complexity of the situation with which the Arrangement sought to deal may be judged from a brief outline of facts. It was necessary to harmonize the territorial ambitions of France and

Russia, the vital and traditional interests of Great Britain in the Ottoman hinterland of the Persian Gulf and the Imperial British waterway of the Suez Canal and the Red Sea.

"It was necessary to do everything possible to maintain concord and unity, not only between European Allies, but between European Allies and Arab Allies. It was necessary to fulfil previous British undertakings to King Hussein of the Hejaz and the Arabs. It was necessary to make some provision for the treatment of Palestine, or at least of Jerusalem, on some other basis than that of unfettered Arab rule. And it should be borne in mind that at the time the clash of interests between France and the Arabs, and therefore between Great Britain and France, threatened to become acute.

"The Arrangement, in fact, had to postulate complete Allied success in the War, for not otherwise could its provisions come into effect. When made, therefore, it showed hopes of apportioning parts of the Ottoman Empire among the Allies at a time when that Empire, supported by the Germanic Powers, seemed far removed indeed from a position in which the Agreement could become operative. And yet accord in advance between the Allies on this subject was vital to their ultimate success in the War. Secrecy, therefore, became a first necessity—how much a necessity in one direction alone appears from the fact that when the Arrangement was given to the world by the Bolsheviks the Turkish Government immediately conveyed its terms to the King of the Hejaz, urging it in incontrovertible proof of British duplicity to her Arab Allies. The King of the Hejaz and his sons were obviously startled, and only their complete faith in the loyalty of Great Britain to the Arab cause, demonstrated now during nearly two years of war, enabled them to resist Turkish arguments based upon the Secret Arrangement.

"The Sykes-Picot Agreement may be said to have been made necessary by the long and persistent French claim to Syria. France had taken a sentimental interest in the country from the days of the Crusades and the Frank Kingdoms. The Syrian campaign of Napoleon confirmed and added to this interest. From the earliest times France had claimed to be the protector of all Latin Christians in the Ottoman Empire in general and in Syria in particular. Since 1860 France had made the Maronites of the Lebanon her particular care. French schools had become numerous in Syria; French capital there sought and found investment; the French language and French culture, it was claimed, had there struck deep roots. When the Ottoman Empire threw in its lot with the Germanic Powers, and it seemed probable that the downfall of that Empire would follow, French public opinion, preoccupied though it was by the presence of German armies on the soil of France, yet found itself able to support the eventual claim of France to Syria with remarkable insistence.

" And this claim took no note of circumstances which had arisen in the Arab world in consequence of the War.

" During the year 1915 Great Britain, in prosecution of the war in the East on behalf of herself and her Allies, obtained the support of the Sherif of Mecca and his sons against the Turks. The Sherif had ambitions for independence of Turkish Sovereignty; he aimed at the creation of an Arab State or a Confederation of Arab States which should embrace all the Arab peoples of Syria, Mesopotamia and the greater part of Arabia, with himself as sovereign of the one and perhaps suzerain of the other. In the negotiations which took place between His Majesty's Government and the Sherif, Great Britain, while giving undertakings to support this scheme, expressly reserved, as not coming within the Arab area, those parts of Syria and south-eastern Anatolia in which France had special claims or which were not peopled by an Arab population. These reserved areas were defined as being Syria lying west of the line Damascus - Hama - Homs - Aleppo and as the Turkish Vilayet of Adana, which includes the towns of Alexandretta, Adana and Mersina. Subject to these reservations, and in consideration of the Sherif of Mecca and his Arabs making an effective rising against the Turks, Great Britain pledged herself to freeing the Arab populations from

Turkish rule, and to establishing, not necessarily over the whole Arab area, an independent Arab State. In this guarantee to the Arabs France subsequently joined. Important results were hoped for from this Arab rebellion led by the Sherif and Ruler of the Holy Places of Islam, not only in a military sense, but still more for its effect upon the world of Islam, and the disastrous blow it would strike at the prestige of the Caliph in the person of the Turkish Sultan.

" But though France assented to and gave her support to the Arab movement for these purposes, she viewed with extreme disfavour, and even with hostility, the prospect of extended Arab military success ensuing from the rising. When the rising seemed certain to take place she pressed her demands for an agreement with Great Britain in regard to Syria. There was reason in her policy, for the Arab leaders made no secret of their hostility to French pretensions in Syria. They held France in deep suspicion. They instinctively felt that between Great Britain and their aims there was nothing but good will, but that between France and these aims existed irremovable hostility. Arab aims and French aims in Syria they knew were incompatible.

" Towards the end of 1915 the British and French Governments respectively appointed Sir Mark Sykes and M. Georges Picot to prepare the terms of an Arrangement which should solve, as completely as possible, the difficult questions which had arisen between the two countries in regard to the Arab regions of the Ottoman Empire. The outcome was a draft of the so-called Sykes-Picot Agreement so far as it affected Great Britain and France. The Agreement was then submitted to the Imperial Government of Russia, which eventually recognized, subject to certain conditions, the arrangement made between Great Britain and France relative to the constitution of an Arab State or a Confederation of Arab States, and to the partition of the territories of Syria, Cilicia and Mesopotamia.

" In brief the Arrangement so reached provided for the recognition and upholding of an independent Arab State or a Confederation of Arab States in the regions of Syria and Mesopotamia; but part of this Arab State or Confederation of States was placed under indirect French control and part under similar British control. That in the western part of Syria and in south-eastern Asia Minor, including Cilicia and an area extending to Sivas, France should be allowed to establish such direct or indirect administration as she thought fit. That in the southern part of Mesopotamia Great Britain should have the same privilege; and that Jerusalem and the surrounding district should be placed under an international administration.

" This Arrangement, with certain modifications, chiefly with regard to Palestine, formed the basis of the territorial provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres.

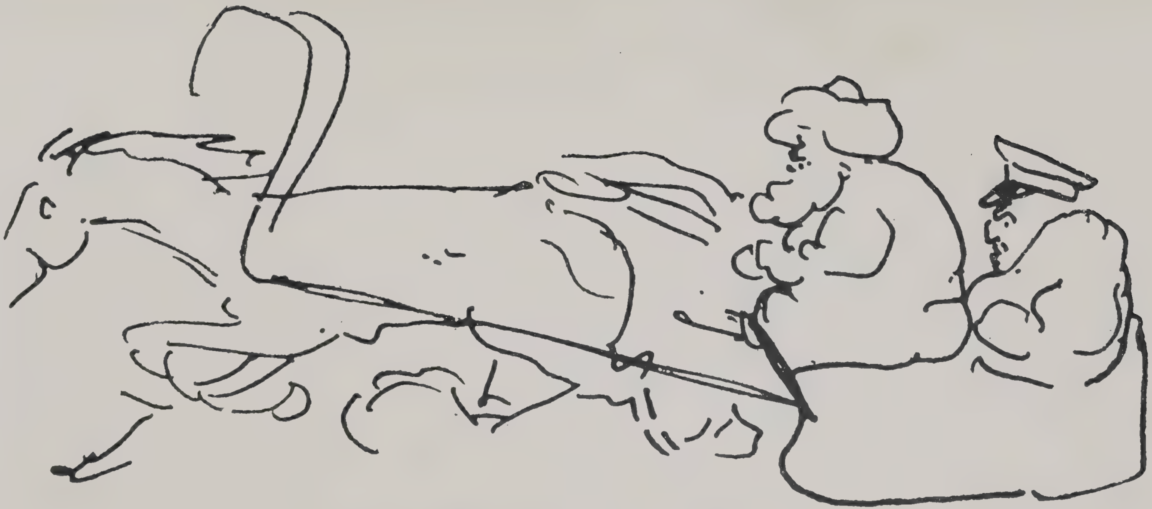
" British pledges to King Hussein and the

Arabs were carried out by the Arrangement and the subsequent Treaty of Sèvres, though the King professes that they were not executed to the letter. His great ground for complaint lay in the independent Arab State or Confederation of States being placed partly under French and partly under British control. In a word, he objected to the presence of France in any part of Syria. But that objection merely illustrates one of the insoluble difficulties which the Arrangement sought to compose."

February, 1916, saw Mark sped on a mission to Russia. He reached Bergen on March 1, and Stockholm the next day. March 7 found him sledging to Tornea. He reached Petrograd at one on the morning of March 9, and remained nine days. Thence to Moscow, Tiflis, Baku, and back to London by April 10. At Petrograd he saw the Czar, and in the Caucasus reported to the Grand Duke Alexieff on the situation at Kut, which, however, developed into disaster soon after he returned. As he said in the House (July 20, 1916): "In the surrender of Kut the Turkish Army had the greatest success that it has had since it surrounded Peter the Great at Pruth in 1711." From Stockholm he wrote:

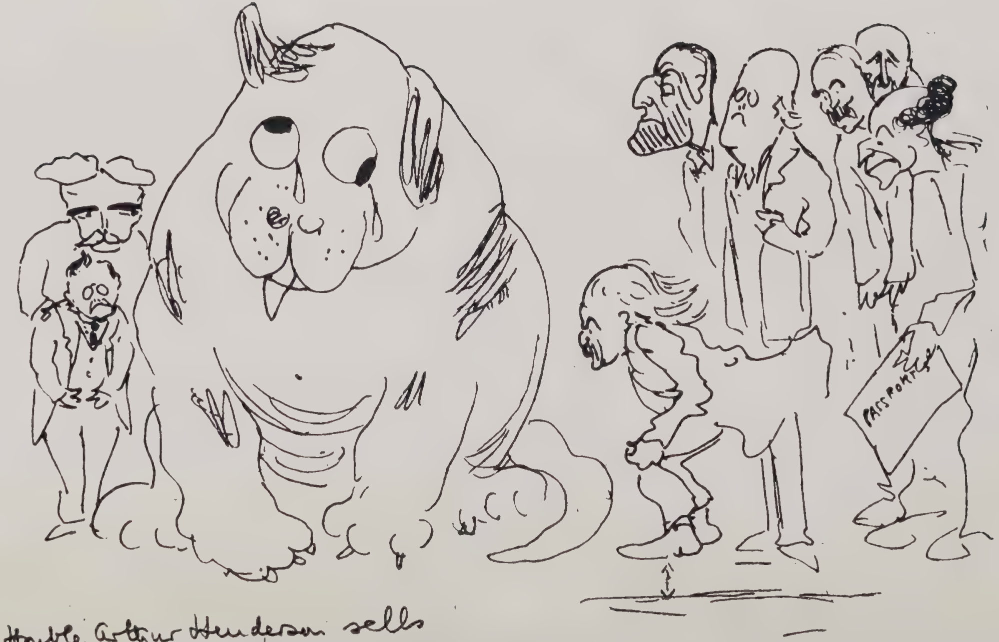
March 4, 1916.

This part of the world is very little understood at home, I think. The keynote is that it is the end of civilization, since when you get to Lapland you reach pagans and primitive people—not better than South Islanders who carve wood. Here is an oddity. You know the carpenter's plane,



MARK VISITS THE TSAR.

Friday August 10th 1917



The Rt. Hnble Arthur Henderson sells the War Cabinet an "immense" pup.

MR. HENDERSON'S RETURN FROM RUSSIA.

with its handle—well, the handle is common to all carpenter's shops. I saw some planes in the museum from North Sweden about three hundred years old. Just the same, evidently a constant repetition of something one hundred or more years earlier, only the handles were all horses, quite rough. Evidently our handles are the remains of this.

Prof. Gilbert Murray and lady came here to convert the Swedes to our side in the war. The trouble is that they don't understand that we have been great not because of Liberalism, but because of our extraordinary geographical position which has permitted of our playing the fool; and the Germans with a vile geographical position have by Iron, Blood, Discipline, Brutality, Labour, Sweat, Ruthlessness, Devotion, Pertinacity made themselves of some account. They don't understand that if the Germans had had politicians like Gladstone and Cobden and philosophers like these Bryce-ites they would either be ruled by Russia, France or Turkey. They can't deinsulate themselves.

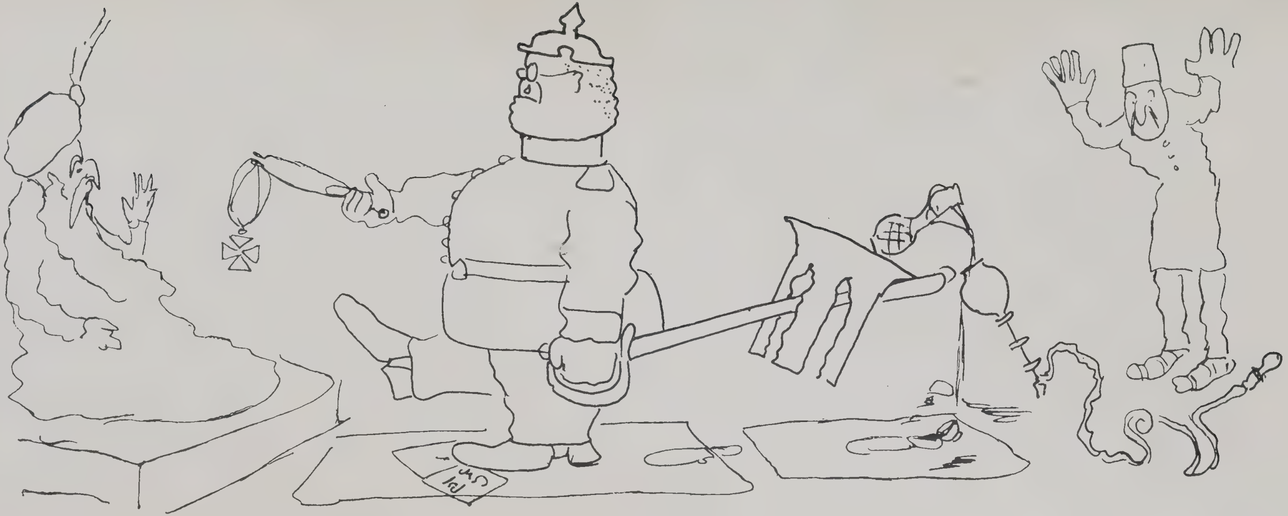
PETROGRAD.

Since I last wrote I have had wonderful luck, settled everything, and should be soon back after you get this. Information by mouth. Now only personal details for your amusement. Petrograd delightful, all sorts of funny old things: a guard, a coachman of State, one drives in sleighs; but this hotel is nothing but a brothel and consequently very noisy. The reading-room is like the Empire promenade and full of officers and other persons. I am reading Johnson's life again. He would make the same observation about this hotel as he did about the Green Room at Drury Lane: "The Silk Stockings of *your* actresses disturb me."

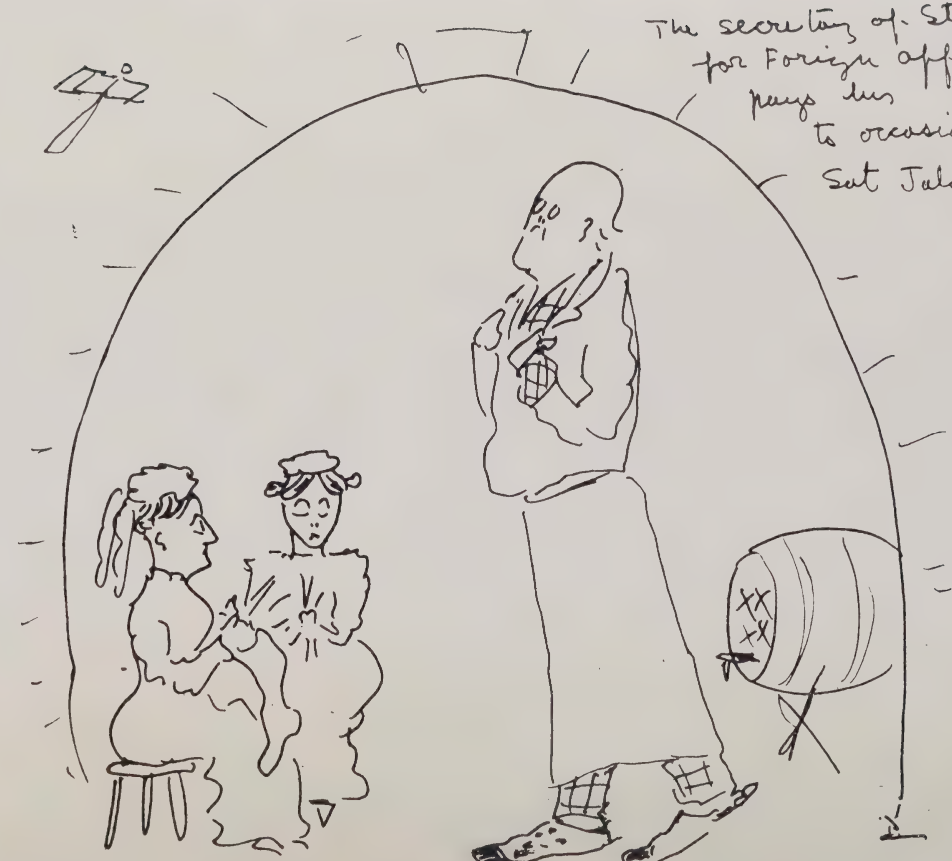
In May he was attached to the Committee of Imperial Defence as *liaison* officer for Middle East affairs between the Foreign, War and India Offices. On June 1 he made the arrangements for 210 Members of Parliament to meet Kitchener privately in Committee Room 14. Kitchener received a considerable reception and a hearty endorsement. It was his last levée, for no one present saw him again. Mark was with Mr. Lloyd George, one of those who missed accompanying him on his ill-fated journey to Russia. If Mark had had his way, Kitchener would have received a Viceroyalty of the Middle East, as he wrote long before the war: " The only hope for the Armenian provinces would be in the advent of some born despot and statesman like Peter the Great." Action, however, was taken on his report, tending to the liberation of the Arabs and the repulse of the Turks. When Sir Stanley Maude captured Baghdad it was Mark who wrote his proclamation with some Oriental savour. Two paragraphs certainly show the authorship:

" (5) It is the wish, not only of my King and his peoples, but it is also the wish of the great nations with whom he is in alliance, that you should prosper even as in the past when your lands were fertile, when your ancestors gave to the world literature, science and art, and when Baghdad city was one of the wonders of the world.

" (9) O people of Baghdad, remember that for twenty-six generations you have suffered under strange tyrants, who have ever endeavoured to set one Arab house against another in order that they might profit by your dissensions. This policy is abhorrent to Great Britain and her Allies, for there can be neither peace nor prosperity where there is enmity and misgovernment. Therefore I am commanded to invite you, through your nobles and elders and representatives,



TURKO-GERMAN DIPLOMACY.



The secretary of State
for Foreign affairs
pays his tribute
to occasion.

Sat July 7. 1917.

MR. BALFOUR IN AN AIR RAID.

to participate in the management of your civil affairs in collaboration with the political representatives of Great Britain who accompany the British Army, so that you may be united with your kinsmen in north, east, south and west in realizing the aspirations of your race."

Of the future of Baghdad he wrote as in a trance:

> It will mean eventually putting down something like a new Hamburg in the world! . . . The Arab in the fourth century liked Corinthian columns so much that he built them in the desert. . . . People were studying Plato in Baghdad in the eighth century. . . . The Baghdad Railway a return to what was the Overland Route of the Middle Ages!

One only of Mark's letters describing war incidents was written from London, but he had the good luck to glimpse the burning of a Zeppelin from his own house:

> *August* 3, 1916.
>
> I have forgone my week-end and been rewarded. At two-fifteen I was aroused from a dream of Lloyd George moving all our furniture and throwing it downstairs, by finding that shells were bursting on both sides of the house, say, about a mile and a half away. Out of your window I only saw shells, but I crossed to the other side and saw a Zepp very clearly with shells bursting near it. In about five minutes it made off due north and disappeared, so I went back to watch the bombardment on the (Westminster) Cathedral side. Suddenly the sky from the north began to light up until it was like daylight just after the sun rises, only bright red. I ran back to my room only when it was quite dark again. Everywhere you could hear little distant cheers. The light lasted by my calculation about thirty-five seconds.
>
> . . . At Cuffley it was Goodwood on the big day. Cars

and crowds and crowds, bicycles, motors, dog-carts, vans full of girls and men, and converging streams of people on foot, all in the highest spirits. I cannot estimate crowds, but every road was blocked and people were pouring over the fields, and I remember every platform of the twelve stations between Finsbury Park and Cuffley had been crowded. So to a little field where some two hundred Scots Guards held the ground, and in the midst the wreckage. . . .

Much was fished out of the wreckage, one gondola complete, barely scorched, and a great deal of other stuff, including fifteen German bodies which looked very like Rameses at the Bulak Museum.

The boy Robinson who bagged the Zepp was so excited after he had succeeded he sent all the signals wrong, viz.: "Failed." "Trying again." "Going on farther." A most interesting afternoon I think, don't you? I am sending each of the children a piece of Zepp, but they must keep them.

Mark was untiring during the war. He served on four fronts, crossed the Mediterranean six times and the North Sea twice, and refused an Under-Secretaryship of State, though he became an Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet. Whenever he had time, he spoke in the House. In January, 1916, he spoke on conscription, criticizing, though with understanding, Sir John Simon, Ramsay MacDonald and Redmond. Next month he urged that the Cabinet should be reduced to four to conduct the war, which advice was eventually taken in December of the same year.

"This war was not an interlude. It was the great climacteric of Empire." And again: "We discuss, the enemy decides; we investigate, the enemy plans; we wonder, the enemy acts." He told the wounded

Canadians that "the election of Eatanswill has been the national pastime in the country for 200 years."

The Dublin Rising provoked a general desire to see him succeed to Birrell, being, as someone wrote, "an instrument forged by the gods." He himself pointed out that the German Staff, "if they could not cut the tendons, desired to provoke gout in the heel of Achilles. The fall of England equally means the ruin of Ireland. Now is the time to thwart the German General Staff, now is the time for Irishmen to settle with Irishmen in justice and good fellowship." Late in the year he became intermediary between the two parties in Ireland, but found Ulster then irreconcilable. After attending the Requiem of the Irish Guards in Westminster Cathedral he replied to an article in the *Morning Post* (November 27, 1916):

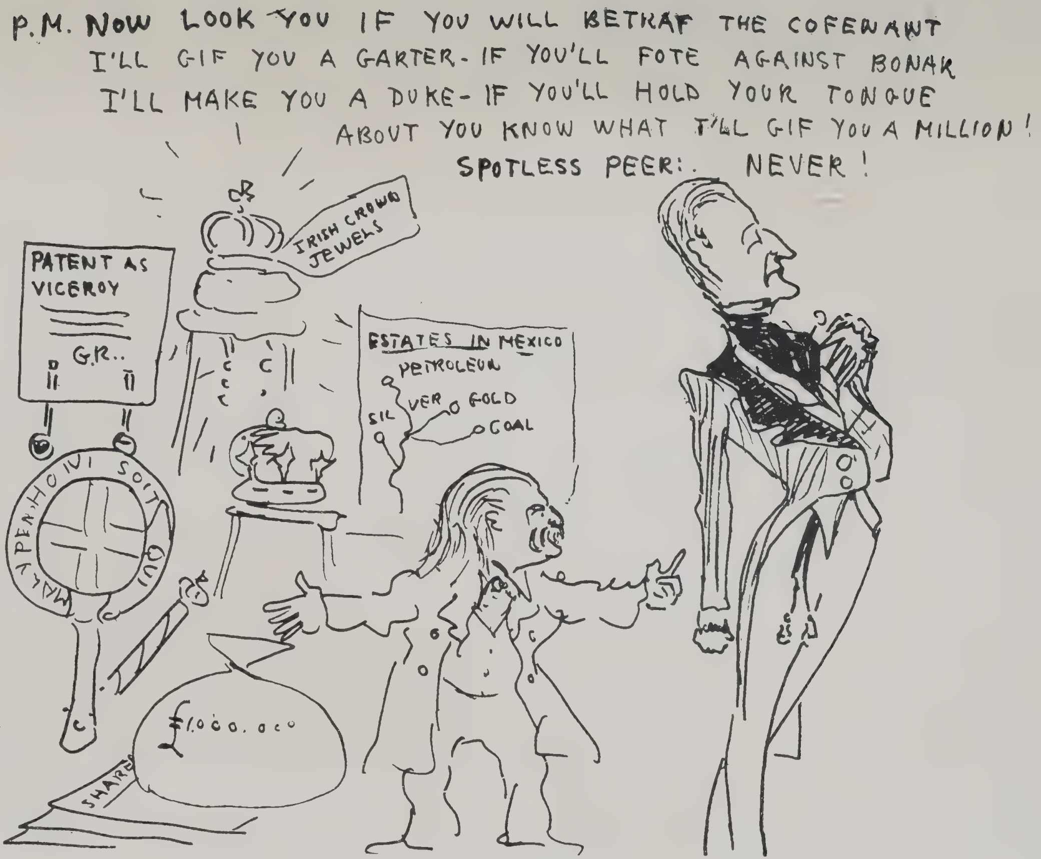
"The martial instinct and the intense enthusiasm of the Irish people are the two British assets, which by hesitation, prejudice and folly, we have succeeded in stifling and curbing until almost all that is left of it are the little crosses which mark the Irish graves in France and Flanders. Elsewhere in the Colonies and in America, wherever the Irish are, we have checked enthusiasm, stimulated old grievances and clouded men's minds with doubt. In Ireland itself the tragedy will not bear looking on; the enemy sowed tares among the wheat, and we have done our best to burn the standing crop to mend matters. Yet there is such a thing as doing the right thing at the right time; time and again right times have passed and wrong things have been done and the reward has been reaped. The Australian Referendum, the backing of the peace move in the United States, are perhaps not unconnected with our errors."

The *Morning Post* rejoined with a reference to "Iron Truths and Golden Fancies," and Mark replied a little bitterly (December 1, 1916):

"Ireland in a position to exert her full spiritual and material strength in the present war is the thing that Hindenburg wishes to prevent becoming an iron fact [*eisener Realfakt*]. His golden fancy [*königlich-kaiserlich-hindenburgisch-goldene Einbildung*] is to see Ireland made a Belgium by troops who are at present engaging his earnest attention on the Somme. However, facts and fancies differ, according to the point of view of the person who regards or indulges in them."

He spoke in the House on both the Dardanelles and Mesopotamia Commissions. In the course of a searching speech on the former he told a personal anecdote of Kitchener sending for him after the evacuation of Gallipoli and saying: "I have not slept for three nights because I have had a picture before my eyes of those poor men being drowned and massacred on the beaches of Gallipoli."

On the Kut disaster he spoke with brief mockery (July 12, 1917): "We landed at Basra. We went on to Amara to hold Basra, and we went on to Kut to hold Amara. We sent a representative to Baghdad in 1798, and we have had one there ever since, and we landed on November 22, 1914. We had 120


P.M. NOW LOOK YOU IF YOU WILL BETRAF THE COFENANT
I'LL GIF YOU A GARTER - IF YOU'LL FOTE AGAINST BONAK
I'LL MAKE YOU A DUKE - IF YOU'LL HOLD YOUR TONGUE
ABOUT YOU KNOW WHAT I'LL GIF YOU A MILLION!
SPOTLESS PEER: NEVER!
PATENT AS VICEROY
G.R..
IRISH CROWN JEWELS
ESTATES IN MEXICO
PETROLEUM
SILVER
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HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENS
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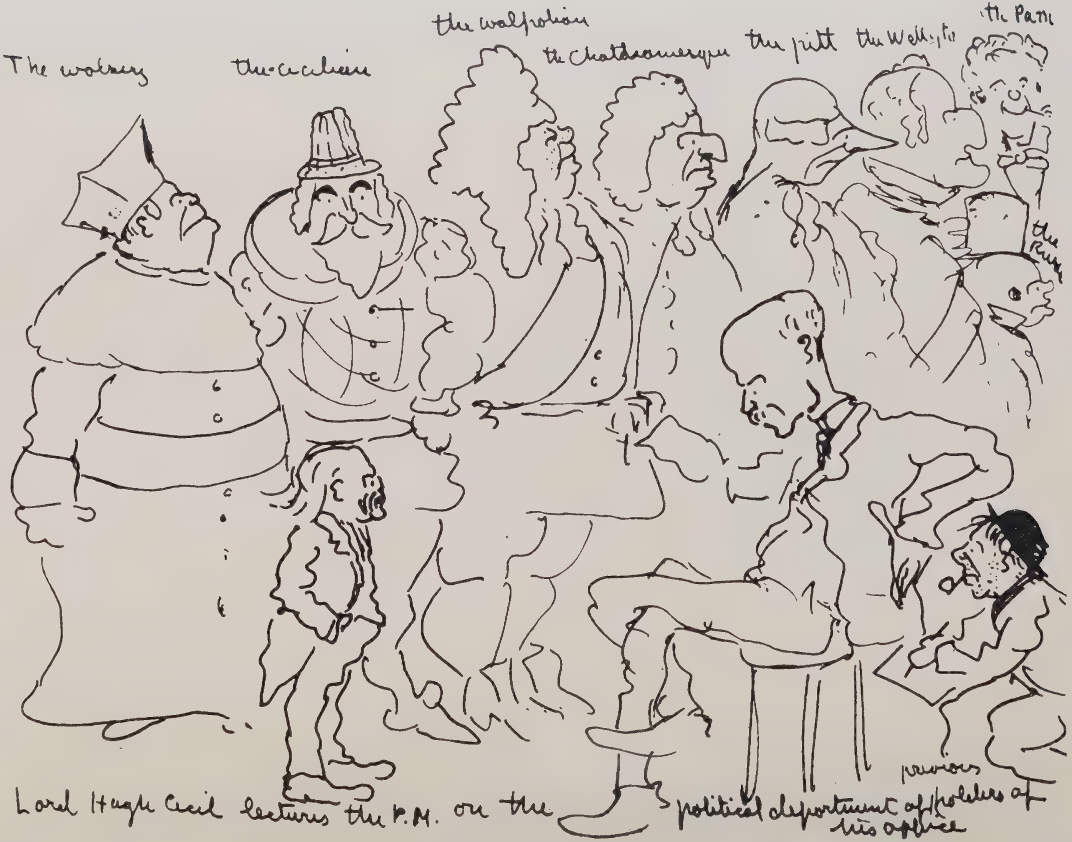
SHARES

LORD LONDONDERRY RESISTS LLOYD GEORGE.


The wolsey
the cecilian
the walpolian
the Chathamesque
the pitt
the Wellington
the Pam
the Russ
Lord Hugh Cecil lectures the P.M. on the political deportment of previous holders of his office

LORD HUGH CECIL LECTURES MR. LLOYD GEORGE.

years to consider what we should do if we landed in Mesopotamia and we had ten months to decide whether we should go on or not. But when Kut fell, then began the game of baseball or rounders between the Viceroy, the Committee, the Cabinet, the Secretary of State and G.O.C., and three weeks were wasted. We ought to have known the day before the battle whether we were going on to Baghdad."

The issue of Irish conscription arose, and Mark resented the miserable impasse which the Government had created for itself. He spoke in the House (April 12, 1918), pointing out on the one hand, "here you have a divinely made weapon rusting on the ground unused, unusable." On the other hand the Irish Rising "was repressed with a lumpish and idiotic violence as abominable and bad as the palsied inertia which preceded it." He begged for Home Rule immediately to "stabilize our moral position." He pointed out that every Irish crisis opened a door to a settlement, and he suggested as a working formula that "if the Irish nation is in the war, Ulster is in the Irish nation." But the time was not yet.

May saw him engaged in stern controversy with *The Times* during the wave of anti-Catholic feeling which the attitude of the Irish bishops produced. He wrote: "As a Catholic who has studied the history of his country I know that even such instruments as Titus Oates and Lord George Gordon were able in the past to achieve a good deal in moments of national stress, also as a Catholic I know that, when religious passions are aroused, neither the personal character nor the general sympathy of our Protestant fellow-citizens can save us from the effects of persecution. But this latter is a minor consideration. Blessed Thomas More climbed the scaffold with a jest and died with a prayer for his king on his lips. His fortitude and citizenship will, I make no doubt, inspire us to endure whatever inconveniences may be in store for us. The main point to my mind as an Englishman is whether the stimulation of religious conflict is likely to help to win the war." A *Times* article followed shadowing the end of toleration and laying the action of the Irish bishops to the Vatican. Mark returned to the charge. "The Vatican has as little to do with the attitude of Irish Nationalists as it has to do with General Hertzog. No one has yet accused Cardinal Mercier of acting on Vatican inspiration." *The Times* insisted that he had still left his attitude in doubt, and Mark replied (May 7, 1918): "My attitude, I think, is plain enough. I believe in principle that religion should never be used to reinforce a political movement. Your attitude, however, is not so clear. Though you condemn the Irish bishops on this occasion with great fervour, I would point out that you never condemned the religious complexion which was given to the whole Ulster movement any more than you condemned the Bishop of Laibach for espousing the Jugo-Slav cause nor the present Government for summoning the Irish bishops to the Convention." In June he made a signal contribution to the Irish debate, Sir

Edward Carson lamely interfering and the Prime Minister summing up his speech as " characteristically courageous." Mark said: " The reason why there is no law in Ireland is this, and I am sure the member for Trinity College will admit it: that he himself challenged the law." And in his speech of July 29 he was candid in apportioning blame to Sir Edward Carson. " I admit that the bishops gave him the opportunity, but to take it was not helpful towards winning the war." He appealed to the Irish members, who cheered him when he said that the Battle of the Boyne was not a Christian landmark, but " the prelude to eighty years of the greatest rascality and villainy that have ever been seen." Sir Edward Carson he compared with a rare touch to Falstaff, of whom it was said, " He was rheumatick and talked of the whore of Babylon."

In a private letter he wrote:

July 5, 1918.

I do not admire the Government's policy in Ireland, and I think that Carson is a lop-sided sentimentalist, with that fatal Celtic quality of self-pity largely developed. On the other hand, no power on earth can convince me that either the Nationalists or Clergy have played their cards wisely or rightly in justice, and in these matters there is no distinction between wisdom and right. Time and again the Nationalists and the Clergy have had the game in their hands. Time and again they have thrown it away. My idea is that we should do justice and no more in Ireland, disarm both these humbugs, who only keep arms to avoid having to fight, and smite hip and thigh any man, Protestant or Catholic, who challenges constituted authority. I served under George Wyndham, and I learned this much:

1. Ulster blocked the Land Act in its initial stages

because it was robbing them of one of the engines of ascendancy.

2. The Nationalists got Birrell to stop the Act working because it was killing discontent, and so spoiling their business.

Meanwhile the war is of more importance than Irish politics, and the world is more important than Ireland. Thank God, the English at least know how to endure and say little, and luckily for Ireland the English have short memories. They will forget all this, the melodrama and the bitter, black, unforgiving spirit which cherishes old wrongs and invented all those charming tricks by means of which what poor George Wyndham called the **IBERIAN SUBSTRATUM** manifests itself to the world in times of other people's trouble. You see, I see both sides of the Irish question, and there have always been two sides. Even though Piggott was a forger, nevertheless the League accounts were not forthcoming. Pompey and Cæsar very much alike, especially Pompey, I am afraid is the ugly truth.

Whether criticizing Nationalists or Orangemen in Ireland, Mark could show his edge, but never a bitter one. He conceived his politics, letters, sketches and speeches in a rush and executed them at whirlwind speed. He could feel the exasperation of the moment, but he never had the time to brood or stagnate or hate.

CHAPTER XI

DEATH

TOWARDS the middle of the war a new interest, which had long been growing, assumed the chief place in his mind. In his last months and in his death he became closely associated with Zionism. Before the war he had disliked it as "bad cosmopolitanism and finance," but he came to the decision which he announced in Hull that "it would mean that every Jew throughout the world would be made more valuable to the State which he had chosen for himself." It was his Catholicism which assisted Mark to understand the Jewish tragedy. He was interested in the ethos of the real Hebrew, not in the Anglicized Jew. Perhaps his first step towards Zionism occurred in his striking suggestion of 1904 in favour of Jewish dress: "Imagine how picturesque and interesting a walk in the City would become, what a blaze of colour Capel Court would be, if the children of Israel retained their ancient and handsome dress." When he went to Russia he found eyes fixed on Constantinople from Russia, at which all Jewry glanced furiously awry. The Sephardim of Salonica, driven out of Spain, instinctively supported Turkey against Russia. Russia fell, and Mark felt that the problems of Palestine and the Jewish question could be solved together if Zionism tended to draw the Salonica Jews out of the Ottoman rut. He decided that there was room for a Jewish as well as an Arab nationality. He figures considerably in Nahum Sokolof's "History of Zionism." "For more than two wonderful years we were in daily intercourse with him." Anti-Zionist schemes used to bring Mark to the telephone with what the Zionist leaders came to call his "brain-storms." Sokolof went to Rome in April, 1917. "Sykes," he recorded, "had been there before me and could not wait my arrival. He had gone to the East. I put up at the hotel. Sykes had ordered rooms for me. I went to the British Embassy. Letters and instructions from Sykes were waiting for me. Then I went to the Italian Government offices. Sykes had been there too. Then to the Vatican, where Sykes had again prepared my way. It seemed to me as if his presence was wherever I went, but all the time he was far away in Arabia, whence I received telegraphic messages."

He became engrossed in this single subject, for he saw the end of the war coming from the East and in fulfilment of the dream of small nationalities arising not in the rowdy Balkans so much as in dormant Asia. Nationality, as none knew better than he, conveys nothing in the East, where the line of coalition is religious, not racial. But the connection of the Arab State with a liberated Caliphate in the Moslem world and the realization of Zionism for the Jews seemed to assure a new future. At the beginning of 1917 Mark was collaborating both with

M. Picot and the Zionists. From April to June he was in Egypt.

He wrote from Rome (April 15, 1917): "The complexities of my work are to me appalling—just look—

Anglo-India *v.* Anglo-Egypt
Latins *v.* Greeks
Army *v.* Civilians
French *v.* British
French *v.* Italians
Christians *v.* Moslems
Jews *v.* Christians
Arabs *v.* Arabs
Syrians *v.* Hejaz

and as a presiding genius the great War Cabinet plus the Foreign Office. This will, I hope, disentangle itself somehow." From Rome he went to Port Said and Cairo, and thence to the Jeddah to negotiate with King Hussein, returning to London June 14. Until November he was arranging the preliminaries to the Balfour Declaration. "In the midst of this busy world," wrote Sokolof, "Zionism maintained its prominent position. Everything had to pass through Sykes's hands."

Mark addressed the great Zionist gatherings which were held in England and which, though their object was different, partook of the nature of meetings addressed by Peter the Hermit. In London (December 2, 1917): "It might be the destiny of the Jewish race to be the bridge between Asia and Europe, to bring the spirituality of Asia to Europe and the vitality of Europe to Asia." He believed that Palestine would be the centre of ideals radiating out to every country. "You will always look back with joy to the fact that when the promise was held out to you of reparation you thought of your fellows in adversity, the Armenians and the Arabs." And, again, at Manchester (December 7, 1917): "No British Jew will be less British because he can look at the cradle of his race with pride. You know the Semite sleeps, but never dies. To-day the Arabs were seven or eight millions. There was a combination of man-power, virgin soil, petroleum and brains. What was that going to produce in 1950? The Mesopotamian canal system would be reconstructed. Syria must become the granary of Europe. Baghdad, Damascus and Aleppo would be each as big as Manchester. Therefore, I warn Jews to look through Arab glasses."

Of this meeting Sokolof wrote: "The audience felt itself transported into another and better world. The poetry of the East diffused itself as a softening charm over the hard-cut lines of high political argument. He had no time to stay, as he had to catch the night train. He was due in London next morning to send urgent telegrams to Palestine."

Mark's summary of the Eastern trend of events appears in a letter to Lord Robert Cecil:

October 13, 1917.

The present prospect in the Middle East is not unfavourable compared to what it was in the early days of 1916, when the following situation obtained:

I. Anglo-French relations in Eastern affairs were very much strained, and east of Brindisi the Entente hardly existed in name.

II. The Arab movement was regarded as a dangerous and visionary idea.

III. The Dardanelles had been evacuated with a terrible blow to our prestige.

IV. A considerable reverse had overtaken us in Mesopotamia.

V. A huge immobile and unorganized force was isolated in Egypt.

VI. Turkish prestige was high, with the natural result that it menaced us in India, Afghanistan and Egypt.

Now:

I. We have been able to foster the Arab movement till it has become a considerable military-political asset.

II. We have been able to occupy Palestine and a great part of Syria without unduly straining French susceptibilities.

III. We have occupied Mesopotamia effectively.

IV. We have been able to wear down Turkish resistance to so fine an edge that General Allenby's victory in Palestine has, by accounting for 80,000 men, reduced Turkey to temporary impotence in the field.

Peace, or at least armistice, seems now to be imminent, and I think you will agree that it is of the greatest importance both to this country and to humanity in general that we should now exert ourselves to the utmost in order to obtain as satisfactory a settlement of the Middle Eastern question as military and political circumstances will permit. The problems which confront us in those parts are thorny, complicated and even dangerous, but if so good a result could be brought about in 1918 out of the bad situation which subsisted in 1916, I think that one would be a pessimist indeed if one could not hope to build a sound settlement on the existing state of affairs.

I think that the work which has to be done now falls into two following categories:

I. As regards purely British interests, it is, I think, desirable:

(*a*) Without in any way showing any desire to annex Palestine, or establish a Protectorate over it, to so order our policy that when the time comes to choose a mandatory power for its control, by the consensus of opinion and the desire of the inhabitants we shall be the most likely candidate.

(*b*) That we should establish our political influence in the Mosul area.

(*c*) That we should be on good post-war terms with the French so that the Entente may continue as a permanent factor.

(*d*) That we should hold the confidence and affection of the Arabic-speaking peoples of Asia.

As regards general world interests, which as Great Britain is a world-power are British interests, it is desirable:

(*a*) That we should do all in our power to foster and revive Arab civilization and promote Arab unity with a view of preparing them for ultimate independence.

(*b*) That we should promote to the best of our ability the permanent settlement of the Armenian question.

(*c*) That we should, so long as we are responsible, pursue a policy in Palestine which will take into equal consideration the safeguarding of the rights of the indigenous population, the wise and practical development of the Zionist movement, and the safeguarding of the various interests in the Holy places. Further, we should endeavour so to rough-hew the administrative organization of Palestine that the post-conference administration can take over these various problems in a condition which will make it easy for this policy to be continued.

> (*d*) The United States Government should be put in a position to study the whole of the Middle Eastern problems, and should be associated in their settlement.
>
> As matters now stand, we have all the elements at hand to carry the above ideas into effect. The elements are as follows:
>
> I. In Palestine we have able administrators.
>
> II. We have an excellent organization in Mesopotamia.
>
> III. We have recognized Arab independence at Damascus.
>
> IV. We have a clear understanding on all practical points with the French in regard to Syria.
>
> V. We are on good terms with the King of Hejaz.
>
> VI. Our military road is fairly open to Mosul.
>
> VII. We have magnificent prestige.

With the fall of Jerusalem Mark again exercised his learning and enthusiasm to prepare the proclamation which signalled Allenby's entry. "Sykes decided then, the whole of Palestine and Syria being in British hands, to travel thither to gather fresh information and to bring the results of his latter observations to the Peace Conference" (Sokolof). He left London October 30, went by cruiser from Taranto to Port Said, and reached Jerusalem on November 12. On the way he interviewed the French Foreign Minister, Bogos Pasha and the Armenian delegation in Paris. In Rome he saw Cardinal Gasparri, Mgr. Cerretti and General Townshend, just released by the Turks. Here Mark made a clear statement as to the future of Armenia, and, finding Père Lagrange, added him to his mission, which already included Major R. M. Gladstone and two Arab officers who had deserted from the Turks, as well as the faithful quartermaster-sergeant and secretary, Walter Wilson. An interpreter, Lieutenant Albina, of the Egyptian force, and a French officer made up the party. Mark scribbled from Rome:

> *November*, 1918.
>
> Off I hope to-night, but the French Navy is a weapon rather of Art and Drama than precision and science, so we shall get there when we do. The general temper here is one of great enthusiasm and satisfaction at the extraordinary events in the Trentino. Processions, cheers, shouts and cries. Food is intolerably dear; ten francs for two alleged quails, which were really thrushes, is the limit I think. We leave for Messina at midday. I will wire you our arrival in Egypt. I have been to the Vatican and saw Monsignor Cerretti, who is delightful, and Cardinal Gasparri, who is rather like L. G. You will have observed that the Armenians have been completely let down by the Armistice. Armistice is not peace, but we shall have a hard struggle I make no doubt; but prayers and energy ought to secure victory. I do hope you are not feeling too lonely. I do not see how my mission can keep me very long, but I am certain that work on the spot and first-hand information is essential. The Peace Conference cannot meet for a month, and in that time one can get a good deal of information.

It was Mark's ninth visit to Jerusalem, and after a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre he joined Colonel Storrs, the Military Governor. Storrs's letters were confidential, but one note to Mark may be reproduced:

> *September* 8, 1918.
>
> Christendom in the Holy Land seems unaware that such a thing as an English Catholic exists. I had to force the S. and P. Relief to take Feilding on to their Committee. Barlassina, an Italian bishop, is just coming out. Is there

no hope of any English Prelate of standing, if only to prove to the world that we are not equally divided into Atheists and Church Missionary Society?

Mark was quartered in the Augusta Victoria, the German hostel on the Mount of Olives. He then set out by motor to Jericho, through the Jordan Valley to Es Salt, and summed up the political situation. From Jerusalem he sent his wife a line concerning the imminent General Election (November 17, 1918):

November 17, 1918.

I have only a few moments. I have said my prayers for you and babies and everybody at Bethlehem and the Holy Sepulchre. The situation is very complex, but one should not put anything into private letters. *Re* Election, I have forwarded my address. I am absolutely in the dark as to what is going on or how the Election arose. Anyway, I cannot bother my head about it now as I have more important things to do. Is Europe in the throes of death or pangs of birth? Difficult to estimate, I am afraid. But you know I have always been an Optimist; so far my Optimism has been justified. Allenby is splendid.

Election mania was running high in England, and the good old game of Eatanswill was once more the national relaxation. At a distance Mark could not understand or care, but he was bitterly incensed by the attacks of his opponent, a Dissenting Minister, who insisted that Mark had not done his duty by his Yorkshire regiment during the war. It was more than regrettable to accuse a man who was then dying slowly for England of having avoided his duty, and it is charitable to leave the issue of the Central Hull election where the electors left it. From Cairo Mark flashed indignant reply (December 9, 1918) to the charges:

> Why was statement not made at War Aims Meeting when I was present? I was put on General Service by Kitchener. Wrote personal letter to Fitzgerald objecting personally. Kitchener insisted by direct imperative order. Despatched Servia, Bulgaria, Dardanelles, Egypt. On completion of work returned by imperative order of Kitchener to London to report personally whole Middle East situation to Asquith Cabinet. Asquith and McKenna will confirm value of report, action taken on report and successful issue of action, namely, ultimate destruction of Turkish forces in Arabia and liberation of Arabs, co-ordination of Arab policy. Then employed by War Cabinet, London, until sent by Grey and Kitchener to Russia to see Sasonov and Caucasus, to report to Grand Duke Alexieff on Kut situation. Again despatched to Egypt to negotiate with King Hussein, returned military political adviser to Foreign Office. . . . Served on four fronts during the war, crossed Mediterranean five times, North Sea twice. Kitchener's direct imperative order based on fact he considered twenty years previous study and specialisation, combined with mapping of 5,000 miles of military roads in Middle East, made it essential I be employed in sphere of hostilities where my knowledge could be used. . . . Electors will decide whether Kedward or Kitchener correct in their views as to how I should have been employed. My going with Kitchener was only countermanded week before, in which case this controversy would not have arisen.

It was his apologia in life and, as it proved, in death.

At Jerusalem his staff was joined by the ever-faithful Jacob, the Arab who had accompanied every expedition of his from the time when Mark was eight years old. From Jerusalem Mark sent home his election address, surely the first ever sent to an English constituency from the Holy City. "Since the commencement of the war I have known no party. I stand for a League of Nations, disarmament and the abolishment of war. In the peace terms I stand neither for aggrandisement nor revenge but for justice, reparation and security. During the war I have accepted neither honour nor office." It was true. He had refused the Companionship of St. Michael and George and an Under-Secretaryship of State. The necessary votes to defeat Mark were lacking by 10,370, and Mark received word of his victory at Aleppo. Lady Sykes had fought his political battle for him in his absence, and he cabled deeply touching words to her, "*Adjutrix mea et liberatrix mea es tu.*" To his constituency he cabled "deepest gratitude for support. Hope to prove worthy of the confidence reposed in me. Hope to visit Hull first opportunity."

He returned to his complicated task in Syria to smooth out the rising chaos of passions and ambitions, promises and expectations which had been bequeathed by the war. He had motored to Jaffa to meet the Zionist delegation. He had visited Nazareth and Tiberias on the way to Damascus, motoring through the wreckage of the retreating Turkish armies. He had seen the Emir Feisul before his departure to London. At Hama a great reception met him, a mounted escort of Arabs cantering in front of the cars. He was welcomed by many notables who remembered him on his early travels as an unknown undergraduate. In return for his speech recommending municipal government a feast of twenty dishes was given. On his departure he saluted the Arab flag amid immense enthusiasm. The flag had been designed by Mark himself. "Black fess for the Abbasids of Baghdad, white for the Omayyads of Damascus, green for the Alids of Kerbela, and red chevron for Mudhar heredity." This flag was flying broadcast through the Middle East and must have caused Mark a strange satisfaction. The wildest dreams of his youth were taking shape. He had never nursed more ambition than to be an explorer of the Middle East. The war had made him a disposer of boundaries and an abettor of nationalities, a weaver of flags. Wherever he appeared in those absorbing days the peoples rose up to acclaim him. The recorder of history found himself making history and taking a humble but personal part in the long line of conquerors who had trod that historical middle zone from Alexander to Allenby. Every day was lived to the full as he struggled to bring order out of the chaos, and to leave his name as a great peacemaker among the peoples who already trusted him as a heaven-sent arbiter of their destinies.

He made his headquarters at Aleppo, where he visited the Governor-General, Shukri Pasha, and the Arab commanders. From Aleppo he made a sortie to Aintab, where the Turks were threatening the Europeans, but Mark, with armoured cars at his back, made the Turkish Governor responsible for any atrocity. At Aleppo he drafted a reform scheme for the administration and left for Adana, whence he returned with his old ally Picot, whom he introduced to the Arab club in Aleppo. He made yet another journey on behalf of the Armenians in Kurdish hands, and met eighteen Kurdish chieftains. He allowed himself no rest nor relaxation. From early morning till late at night all manner of men crowded to his house for counsel and advice, Arabs, Armenians, priests, archbishops, staff officers, consuls, dervishes, missionaries, merchants and refugees. No one was turned away, and Mark often continued his interviews till the small hours of the morning.

The sands of his life were beginning to run out, but he worked on and looked forward to setting the seal on his endeavours at the Paris Peace Conference. His last speech was made at the Arab club in Aleppo on January 15, giving the Arabs the best advice, to avoid rivalry and to aim at constancy, and he suggested the helping power of France. Before he left Damascus he induced Arabs and Zionists to meet and discuss their future. At Haifa he reported to the Commander-in-Chief, and boarded the French cruiser *Cosmao*, arriving in London on January 30 of the New Year. His wife found him worn and troubled about affairs in the East, which were not going satisfactorily. In vain she tried to induce him to take a rest, and they set out to Paris together (February 1, 1919). He arrived in the midst of the gigantic Conference-intrigue. All his friends noticed his poor condition. It only transpired later that he had spent sixteen hours a day at Aleppo working under almost impossible conditions on behalf of Arabs and Armenians. " If they desert the Armenians may God desert them," was his feeling. Still, it was his hope to achieve in the East " a mild dominance of the *Entente* with right intentions." Right intentions, however, were scarce in Paris. In one of his war speeches he had said, " we should go into a new world. We were like Columbus beating across to an unknown shore which he believed would be the promised land. But don't let us make the mistake that the Spaniards made in carrying with us any of the frivolities and follies, the wraths and contentions of the world we had left behind."

Mark was not physically strong enough to do any more work, much less submit to the criticism which home diplomatists were showering on the Sykes-Picot Treaty. He looked like a death-mask, and drew in his belt to show how thin he had become. On February 7 he had an informal discussion with Colonel Lawrence and Sir Louis Mallet. The mandarins were inclined to frown upon him owing to the amount of spoil which the French were claiming in an area where British bayonets had done the fighting. As a matter of fact, M. Clemenceau was induced to give back Mosul which Mark had awarded to the Tricolour. Eastern questions come and go in phases, and the momentary phase was an unlucky one for Mark. Had he had the strength he could have made his points, justified his words and achieved his ends. Had he lived he would have seen himself more often vindicated than not. But the paths of the ten just men who might have been counted in Paris at that time were made exceedingly hard. His friends were out of power in the War Office. Kitchener, on whom he impressed the Arab idea, for they were both desert men, was dead. General MacDonogh for the moment could no longer give him a hand from Whitehall.

Mark had written to the Premier, foretelling "the dire confusion" if General MacDonogh were shifted from Oriental affairs.

> *September* 2, 1918.
>
> Our Arab, Syrian and Palestinian policy has not landed us in any great difficulties, and has, on the other hand, given us a considerable return in prestige, booty and enemy casualties. We have friendly populations, native allies, and good material and moral assets for a peace conference should one occur at any time. Now if any good has been done at all in this matter, I venture to say that it can be attributed to the guidance of Sir George MacDonogh. We have Arab officers in training at Grantham, Zionist agents scattered all over the world, Arab chiefs at each other's throats, French military and civil officials to contend with, Italian representatives to pacify, Syrian colonies to keep in touch with, officers and agents to move hither and thither. You will forgive me if I ask you to imagine what one can hope to do when the man who understood all these things is gone.

Mark's Eastern views and policies had, however, resulted in the greatest tangle. Those who are most willing to revise their opinions in life are likely to suffer most in thought. Mark had travelled mentally as well as physically. His original attitude had been anti-Armenian and pro-Turkish. The war had changed this. During the last days of his life one of his oldest friends chaffed him about his former views and twitted him with having become the protector of the Armenians and the father of the Jews, asking him how he faced questions from his early books. " Oh," he replied with a laugh, " that is quite simple. I have got them all suppressed by the censorship! " From being the evangelist of Zionism during the war he had returned to Paris with feelings shocked by the intense bitterness which had been provoked in the Holy Land. Matters had reached a stage beyond his conception of what Zionism would be. His last journey to Palestine had raised many doubts, which were not set at rest by a visit to Rome. To Cardinal Gasquet he admitted the change of his views on Zionism, and that he was determined to qualify, guide and, if possible, save the dangerous situation which was rapidly arising. If death had not been upon him it would not have been too late.

Mark's work was now to be judged. His policy had been to give countenance to the French in Syria by making move for move in Mesopotamia. Already, as will appear in the following appreciations, there were two views as to the soundness and value of Mark's achievement. On his charm and originality there was no difference, but his policy had raised real enmity. Within the Arab Bureau itself views were varied as they touched the superficiality or depth of his work. Whatever bodings he had as to the Sykes-Picot Treaty, he felt that they had been dispersed by the declaration of November, 1918, which M. Picot and Lord Robert Cecil had agreed to before showing it to M. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George respectively.

Mr. D. G. Hogarth, who served at Cairo in the Arab Bureau during the war, writes:

"Mark Sykes used to appear, half expected and almost out of the blue. Generally he had a not always palatable instruction from London. Sometimes his destination lay farther East. He could hardly galvanize us in the Arab Bureau to a higher power, for usually we were sitting on the safety valve, but he inspired, encouraged and always taught us something. He was full of gorgeous, all-embracing ideas, and he drummed them into us with an exuberant emphasis on single features of men or groups and single aspects of history or present politics, which often ended in his snatching at a pencil and dashing off a whole series of caricatures. But as there is always a serious element in caricature, so there was in his talk, and the more he caricatured the more he convinced himself. We used to watch with sympathy, admiration and some amusement his courageous efforts to turn native minds into his own paths of idealism, and the puzzled, flattered Syrians, whom he left believing he had convinced them, were the better for learning that someone thought them capable of such high things. He won their hearts, if not their minds, and that after telling the least palatable home truths. His value to the causes he adopted seemed to me greatest in London. There he was an invaluable champion. Social position and parliamentary reputation reinforced courage and patent singleness of purpose, and he would prophesy against anyone to the face of anyone. Men whose knowledge of the

East was deeper and wider than his prompted him and put up their ideas through him, knowing that the politician and brilliant amateur would get a hearing. He was so loyal and great a gentleman that he found it hard to believe that men with whom he worked or negotiated were using speech to conceal thought or would go back on a plighted word. In the East he was more free to indulge quick intuitions and skirmish by himself ahead of the lines, neither following nor followed, but giving a full rein to his natural instinct for caricaturing a man, a group, a situation, or a question. Had he been allowed time to mature, Eastern affairs might not have proved to be the chief of his life interests. In home politics he would have found less leeway to make up in order to convert an amateur hobby of youth (he remained surprisingly young to the end) into mastery, and natural inclinations and ties would have rendered his studies easier and more constant.

"In the East his lack of suspicion strewed his way with disappointments, and it was not till the autumn of 1918 that he really got anywhere near facts. As they gradually dawned on him, in Syria itself, he showed a great courage, and a greater still afterwards in Paris. Had he lived longer he would have reconstructed something of more lasting sort, and in any case one cannot but think that some of the shifts, some of the surrenders, some of the pretences, some of the casuistry, which have marked our peace policy in the Near East, would not have been or need not have been so disastrous."

Major-General Sir Gilbert Clayton, who was at the head of the Arab Bureau in Cairo during the war, writes:

“ Sir Mark Sykes was one of those men of broad vision who—like the late Lord Kitchener—saw the war from the very beginning in its larger aspect, and sought by every means and in every quarter to embarrass the enemy and so weaken him in the main theatre of operations. Moreover, he was essentially a champion of oppressed peoples. His knowledge of Turkey and of her internal problems, more especially those connected with her subject races, drew his attention at an early date towards the Arabs, in whose aspirations to independence from Turkish rule he saw, not only a cause after his own heart, but a valuable asset to the Allied arms. It was in the early days of the negotiations with the Arabs that I first met Sir Mark Sykes, and it was largely owing to his co-operation and unfailing support in London that those who were working out the policy on the spot were able to bring it to a successful conclusion. There was at first considerable lack of interest in, and even opposition to, the movement, which some regarded as an expensive and unprofitable ‘ side-show ’; but Sykes’s indomitable perseverance, his unquenchable optimism, his ready wit and, above all, his absolute and transparent honesty of purpose, carried conviction to all but the most prejudiced and obstinate. There are, I think, few who knew this gallant English gentleman well who will not agree that, conspicuous as were his services during the war, his presence at the Conference table would have been even more valuable.

He had the confidence of our Allies, especially of the French, and in this connexion I cannot do better than quote the following extract from one of his private letters to me:

" 'It seems to me that there is a want of proportion in some people's minds; that is a desire to score advantages over the French, or a fear that they desire to score advantages over us. These are very small affairs and a score one way or the other is of no importance. The big affair is the Entente—now and hereafter. For policy there is only one possible policy—the Entente first and last.'

" He had the trust of the Arabs (and Armenians), whose cause he championed so unceasingly. The Zionists, to whose aspirations he gave constant and active support, relied upon him. He possessed a wide knowledge of the Turks and, although sternly opposed to the extreme and revolutionary party, had a wise sympathy with the inarticulate majority. Sir Mark Sykes did not fall on the field of battle, but none the less he gave his life for his country and undoubtedly his unremitting labours undermined his health, causing him to succumb to his last illness. It is permissible to believe that had he lived the situation in the Near East would not be what it is to-day."

The Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P. (now Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies), who also served in the Arab Bureau in 1916 and 1917, writes:

" Mark Sykes was the chief motive force in London behind the British Government's Near Eastern policy in the war. He inspired both the Arab and Jewish policies and was chiefly responsible for securing their adoption by Ministers at home. He was an invaluable champion of any cause, and he embraced the cause of the non-Turkish peoples whose land had been subject to Turkish misrule with all the generosity and enthusiasm for which he was so remarkable. He never failed to see the big issues, and consequently perhaps was impatient of detail. His ideas were rough hewn like his drawings, and his methods direct and at times boisterous. Consequently he was better in London than in the East, where, in the Arab world especially, every issue and every move is complicated by personal or parochial cross currents which tried the patience and ingenuity of every British officer who was trying to help on the spot and usually exasperated Mark at home. Occasionally he let fly with some violence. He often complained that Englishmen and Frenchmen in the Near East still suffered from 'Fashoda' minds. He was particularly resentful of racial prejudices and animosities, between Jew and Arab, on the grounds that both had everything to gain from co-operation and accommodation, while both would fail to achieve their common objects if they wasted their energies in recrimination, suspicion and ill-will. But Mark always underestimated the particularism of the Arabs. He imagined that the Sherifial family had then more power than they had, and though he never believed that anything in the nature of Arab unity could be achieved in a few years, he was carried away by the hope that tribal jealousies, city rivalries and family ambitions would, at any rate in war time, be subordinate to the main idea of starting again free of the Turk. Had he lived, the history of the Near East since the war would have been different. When he was gone there was no one of the same energy or power to keep continuous watch over the whole area, to put before Ministers, soldiers and Civil Servants the vision which is so essential in handling situations which had far-reaching and often unsuspected reactions. The disastrous delays which followed the Armistice would never have been possible had Mark been alive, buzzing about the Government offices, speaking in Parliament, interviewing everybody and compelling the attention even of the most unwilling. Mark was a creative artist in politics. He would have hated administration, and I never could visualize him in charge of any one department or dealing with any single problem by itself. His passionate desire for a settlement of the Irish problem was part and parcel of his passionate desire for an all-round settlement in the Near East. He was a knight-errant for Peace and Justice. He hated intransigeance, he loved goodwill. He wanted to break up the Ottoman Empire, but he bore no malice to the Turk. It would be wrong to write of him as a great 'anti-Turk,' though he was impatient of the 'Turk is a gentleman' attitude of a certain school of Englishmen. The Turkish armistice struck him as bad. A severe armistice followed by a generous treaty was his formula. The one thing which Mark really hated was Bolshevism —Tory Bolshevism as much as Radical Bolshevism, and no one perceived better than he what made for Bolshevism in the world whether in Russia or any other country. He distrusted all extreme forces and all individuals who adopted a *non possumus* attitude. His admiration for practical Zionist effort in Palestine because it was constructive was the measure of his real fear and antipathy to the revolutionary energies of anti-Zionist Jews in Constantinople or Russia."

Of Mark's last day of activity Mr. Sandars recalls (Monday, February 10, 1919): "Mark came into my office [in Paris] in the morning. He began to talk of Turkey. He said things were in a very bad state there. The ridiculous armistice terms had been taken by the Turks as a great victory for themselves, and they were demobilizing by the simple process of getting rid of all the doubtfully loyal and drilling the rest. I asked what was the armistice hitch. He said that when he was last in Paris the terms of an armistice had been drawn up by the War Council as drafted by him, but that 'the little man' L.G. had suddenly gone off at half-cock and wired out to the admiral to make terms at once, as near to the arranged terms as possible, but to make them in such a way as to be first into Stambul. He added, 'I had at least this compliment, that every term which I personally inserted was knocked out by the Turks.' The Turks, of course, accepted the clause: 'The Turks will hand over all coal mines, iron mines, gold mines, etc.,' but the clauses providing that, irrespective of Turkish demobilization, the Allies should at once occupy the fortresses of Zeitun they struck out.

"That evening we went to the Opera. As usual, he facially acted the music, and we laughed over the play (neither of us had heard *Thais* before). Mark and I went out to smoke in the intervals. He remarked two or three times how much that was good in Paris was due to Napoleon III in art, building and organization. Sir Arthur Hirtzel took us all in his car to the Lotti, where Mark jumped out of the car and left us. He never got out of bed again after that night."

On February 11 he was taken ill with influenza. Lady Sykes was also ill, but she rose to nurse him. Had he spent the last year at a headquarters staff or in an arm-chair at Whitehall he might have had some of the strength necessary to resist the disease, but he had given too freely of his power, and there was none left. He never showed any sign of resistance. Sokolof wrote: "On the 10 February Sir Mark hastily entered my room, and on finding me indisposed he shouted, 'There's no time now for being ill.' The following morning he sent word to me that Lady Sykes was better, but that he was taken ill." "I have got it," he said to the faithful Wilson as he went to bed. On February 15 he sent word to find out how Zionist matters had gone the previous day, and full details were sent. His last conscious acts were to make his Confession and receive the Blessed Sacrament. On the evening of February 16 he died. To him was accorded the peace that passeth the understanding of the Peace Conference.

Mark Sykes dead! A genuine cry of grief ascended from strange places. As Sokolof wrote for the Jews: "He was a man who has won a monument in the future pantheon of the Jewish people and of whom legends will be told in Palestine, Arabia and Armenia. We say the rest is immortality—in the annals of Zionism."

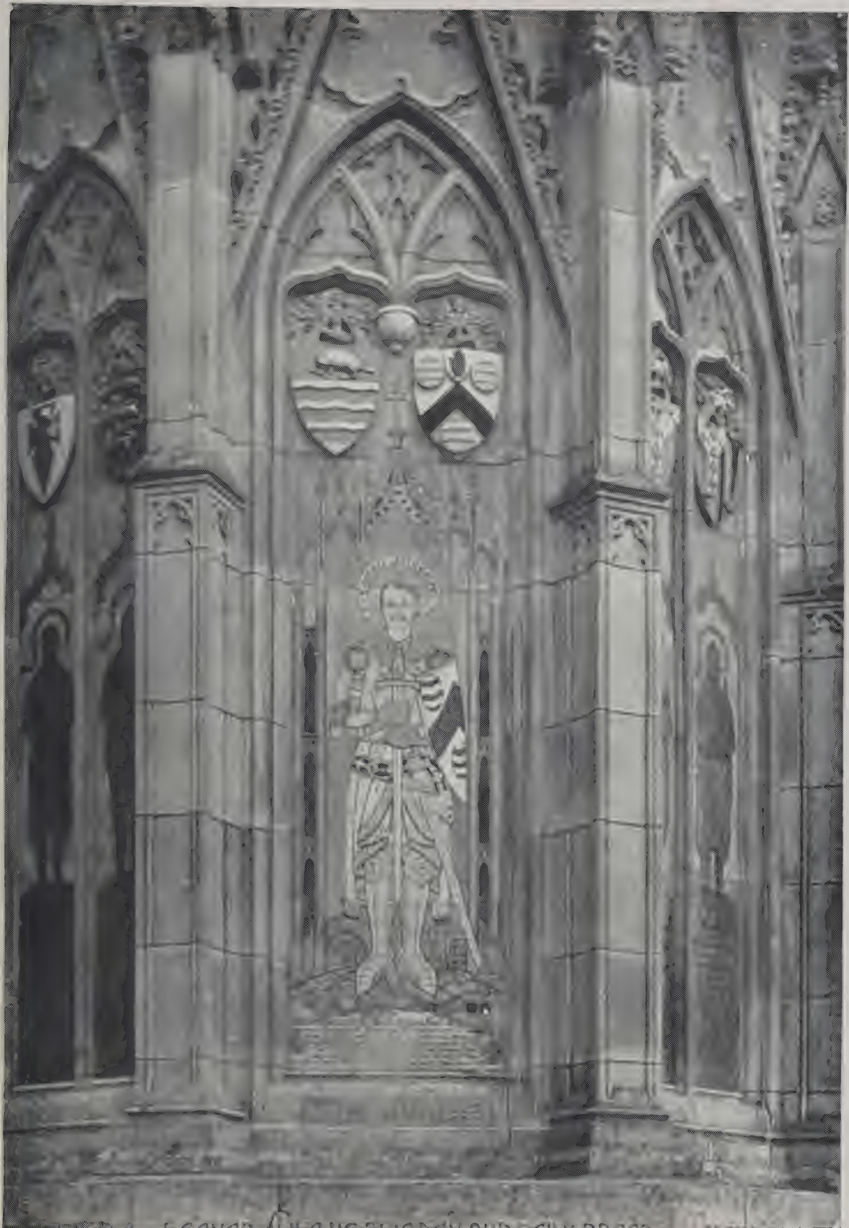
English Catholics mourned him in Westminster Cathedral. Jews in Morocco heard his panegyric from the lips of their Chief Rabbi. In Aleppo and Jerusalem his solemn Requiem was sung. The Armenian nation symbolized their grief by sending a wreath of red roses from "*La nation Arménienne reconnaissante.*"

The King sent gracious word of his regret. "My friendship for Sir Mark extended over a period of some thirty years. His death is indeed a public loss." And the First Minister of the Crown said well: "During the war he gave his energy and his strength ungrudgingly and to the utmost. Had he lived, he must surely have attained great heights."

A note of unusual grief showed itself in the letters of many who must have become almost used to writing mourning letters during the four previous years.

Mark's body was brought home and buried with military honours at Sledmere. In the presence of an enormous crowd of friends, tenants and dependants the coffin, flag-covered, was carried on a gun-carriage. Amid many tapers flickering in the daylight the Abbot and Monks of Ampleforth performed the solemn and piteous rites of the Holy Catholic Church. His widow and eldest children were left kneeling at his grave in the tree-clad spaces between the church which his father had built and the house of his ancestors which he had restored stone for stone during the short hour of his inheritance. Upon the Eleanor Cross outside the demesne walls the last touch was yet to be made. With discerning eye Mark had already turned the mighty monument into a war monument as it stood, painting the mediæval figures and tipping it with a crucifix of jewels. His last days at Sledmere had been devoted to designing the drum-shaped Wagoners' memorial for local stonemasons to finish. But to those near or dear to Sledmere he set up separate brasses in the niched panels of the Eleanor Cross, asking passers-by to remember such friends as Edward Bagshawe, killed in Flanders, "*preux chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*," and others by their trades and ranks. "Ye who read this remember Walter Barker, a footman of Sledmere and a Private in the 5th Yorkshire Regiment"—"Harry Agar, an Agriculturalist and a Lance-Corporal"—"Thomas Frankish, a Carpenter and a Sergeant"—"Harry Addison, a Carpenter and a Lance-Corporal"—"William Watson, a Saddler and a Lance-Corporal"—"David Scott, an Agriculturalist and a Private"—and with them many men and officers of the same regiment who died for the same cause.

As it chanced, one panel was left unfilled, and there Mark's figure was blazoned in the brass, armoured and sworded, with a Paynim lying under his feet, and for scroll the *Lætare Jerusalem*, and in the background the Holy City, for which many Crusaders had striven of old time before him.



THE ELEANOR CROSS, SLEDMERE, WITH BRASS MEMORIAL OF SIR MARK SYKES.

(Shield *argent*, a chevron *sable* between three Sykes proper.)

APPENDIX

LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE

Cardinal Bourne wrote to Lady Sykes (April 1, 1919):

"The terribly sad news of Sir Mark's death reached me abroad when I was practically cut off from all means of sending any message to you, so that it is only now that I can offer you my sympathy in your own great personal sorrow and the assurance of the prayers that I have already offered for his eternal rest. May God be your strength and comfort and watch over and bless you and your children, who will ever find in their father's memory the example of a nobly devoted life. His loss is indeed a grievous one for both Church and country."

The Archbishop of York wrote (March 2, 1919):

"I cannot tell you how distressed I was by the news of your husband's sudden passing. The nation has lost, at least to our human eyes, one who was ready and willing to serve it with singular gifts of experience, knowledge, speech, high ideals, and a service marked for leadership, just at a time when such men are sorely needed. Our poor East Riding has lost its natural leader, and there seems to be no one to take his place. 'Tis very strange that this North Riding in Feversham and the East Riding in Mark Sykes should both be deprived of the service and influence of the two younger men on whom hopes for the future naturally rested. For myself I feel that I have lost one with whom I had hoped to be bound by ties of real friendship. With all who in any way knew him I was greatly interested in his brilliant gifts and by the charm of his personality. I had looked forward to many years of increasing friendship. I did not feel and I don't think he would have felt a difference in religious allegiance, entirely understood and respected on both sides, would have been any barrier. I am very, very sorry that the hopes cannot be fulfilled. But I like to think that when I knelt with him for a few minutes of silent prayer in your Chapel at Sledmere, I felt near him in that inner life of faith and worship which was so real to him and which God is now perfecting I doubt not into something noble and beautiful. May he rest in peace and may light perpetual shine upon him!"

The Bishop of Middlesbrough wrote (April 8, 1919):

"The solemn Requiem for the repose of your dear husband's soul was duly celebrated at the Cathedral. Twenty-four priests with the Bishop took part in the service. The Absolutions were given by the Bishop. I was glad to be able to pay this last tribute to one whom I had known since he was four years of age. May I say how pleased I was with your letter declining the invitation to stand for Hull? The reason you gave, namely, your duty to your children, was a much-needed lesson to the mothers of to-day."

The Bishop of Southwark wrote (March 4, 1919):

"The death of Sir Mark is a blow to the Catholics in this country as well as to your own family. There was every promise that he would be a great leader amongst us, full of enthusiasm, ability and earnestness."

Mr. Balfour (Earl Balfour) wrote (February 17, 1919):

"I have just learnt with the deepest concern of Mark's death, and can hardly yet realize the greatness and suddenness of our loss. It is but a few hours ago that he and I walked here together from the Quai D'Orsay discoursing on all the pressing problems of the Conference, and now he has been taken from us for ever. None of us who worked with him at the Foreign Office or in Parliament are ever likely to forget his unfailing energy and courage or the brilliant humour which sustained our spirits even in the most depressing circumstances. He cannot be replaced."

Lord Birkenhead wrote (February 27, 1919):

"I myself have lost a dear and brilliant friend. What you have lost I can only imagine. But of this I am sure, we shall never in our lives meet anyone like him."

Lord Robert Cecil wrote (February 20, 1919):

"Your loss is terrible, and we all have a part in it. For Mark was a great national asset. His imagination, his knowledge, and his eloquence were of a kind and quality of the rarest. Even rarer was his genuine disinterestedness and patriotism. He worked for causes and for his country and never for himself. Few men had so many friends, none whose friends loved them better."

Lord Curzon wrote (February 23, 1919):

"No words or laments or remembrances or praise can make much difference to you as regards Mark. But as you read the tributes in the newspapers—I never remember anything more unanimous or striking—you must at least feel a glow of pride. He was a figure apart, inspired with an imagination, a force, a brilliancy all his own but dedicated nowhere to selfish purposes, always to high and noble and patriotic ends. I had necessarily seen a good deal of him in connexion with all these Eastern questions in which for the most part we entirely agreed, and his last talk with me was in this room only a few hours before he started for Paris. What a buoyant eager figure, and though only thirty-nine what a rich and crowded life. Such lives seem amid the tragedy of their sudden termination to be intended as a model and an inspiration, and possess a proportion and beauty like some work of art half finished (but yet perfect) from the artist's hand. Do you remember, too, our nights at Hackewood, the young Turk and the old Turk, and that famous gallery of portraits gone for ever with their author?"

Lady Grosvenor wrote (February 18, 1919):

"I weep for you and for England on this lovely morning as your great sorrow reaches me and your great honour too, for he has given his youth and life to Holy Church and to

England. So short, so perfect, he leaves a shining path for others to humbly tread, and how great he was and complete. England will ever be uplifted by the dear name of Sir Mark Sykes and your son will have it in honour to guide him through this world."

Dr. James wrote (February 23, 1919):

"It is impossible not to write to you a word at this time, but it is also infinitely difficult to express what I feel. Simplest is best after all, and I can truly say that I believe I realize something of what the loss of Mark means to you because on more than twenty years' knowledge of him I had a chance of seeing his real goodness as well as all the extraordinary powers and aptitudes that distinguished him from everybody else in my eyes, and while I can't believe that the lighter qualities and gifts come wholly to an end, it is the goodness that certainly lasts. I must always be thankful for having known him. However long the gaps were between our meetings he was always the same. You picked up with him where you had left off, and only found him fuller of interests and surer in grasp of things."

Mr. Egerton Beck wrote (February 21, 1919):

"I am sure that the recollection of his sterling goodness must be a great consolation to you in this time of desolation, and later will be a great joy. He was always the same, boy and man, pure and honourable. I have never known him do a thing that the most scrupulous need be ashamed of. It was the same with his religion. He was always unflinching where anything vital was concerned. And may I add a word I have never ventured to say before? That is that I, who knew him perhaps better than anyone else at that time, know how great a thing for him was his engagement with you; it must have been a wonderful help to him at a time when he particularly needed help."

John Hugh Smith wrote (February 24, 1919):

"I shall always for the rest of my life live largely in the past because of Mark, and there is little in my mind which is not what it is because of him. His conversation was surely the best that one has ever heard; its interests, whether one agreed with his ideas or not, was mastering; its imagination never failed nor its unique humour. And what I feel myself will I know be felt by hundreds of men—not only his friends but his own people at Sledmere and his constituents at Hull and his soldiers: Bedawin, Druses, Kurds and Turks. I believe that all who came in contact with him realized more or less what he was, and even though he is dead on the eve of what would have been the period of his greatest influence and full maturity, his ideal and his vision will still influence the lives of others."

Ronald Storrs wrote from Olivet (February 18, 1919):

"I sit hardly daring to write. It is as if seeing the sun I were asked to believe that it was not to rise to-morrow: the extinction of the vital principle. What can I say? Ever since the spring of 1911 when I first met him Mark has been a centre of interest and affection in my life. His amazing range of knowledge, the extent and variety of his gifts, his chivalrous noble nature, and his sunny never-failing kindness are things that make the eyes dim, even at writing them down. Zionists, Arabs, Armenians are in mourning with us. Whatever justice they may receive will be very largely due to him; and they must all feel with me that they have lost a unique friend. How I rejoice that I rose at four and journeyed till eleven to spend a few precious hours with him in Haifa, and was the last to see him into his skiff that was to take him to the *Cosmao*. Even then I thought him thin and worn, and rejoiced at his five days' enforced rest. He was harassed too a little at the growing Arab-Jew tension, and struggled as none else on earth could struggle to allay and avert it. What I owed him could never have been repaid. Those of us out here who know anything are heavy at England's loss: none know it better than those who saw and knew his work: and we think that his absence is grave for the communion of England and France. I do not like to think of England without him: it will never be the same place."

From Everard Feilding, who had been with him at Aleppo, came true words:

"His loss is irreparable. There is nobody left with not only the knowledge of the countries out here and the politics to be applied, but also of the personalities of all the interested nations; no one with his gift of expression; no one blessed with his complete independence and honesty, forcefulness, initiative and imagination."

And later after four years of disaster had shown that, where Mark was not present to direct his arrow flights, there his quiver was liable to be emptied in vain (for none but Apollo could stretch Apollo's bow), Everard Feilding wrote again:

"He had an extraordinarily difficult and complicated policy to run, namely, to reconcile the Arabs to an arrangement with the French for which he was largely responsible; to reconcile the Arabs and the French to an arrangement with the Jews, for which he was also largely responsible; and to reconcile alternatively English military and political opinion with both. His great care in Syria was to try and reconcile Arab differences with the French and to prevent the French being rubbed up the wrong way by our somewhat short-seeing military administrators. It was the Arabs who prevented the success of the first of these activities, for although he succeeded in getting a Frenchman appointed to work with an English officer in helping the Arab Government of Aleppo to organize the administration, the Frenchman's office was entirely neglected by the Arabs, who refused to have anything to do with him whatever. This was also our experience in Damascus, where Cornwallis, who was the English representative there, did his level best to associate the French representative with all that he did, but was continuously brought up short by Arab refusal to co-operate with them. The French put this down to obscure English intrigue and were hideously wrong in doing so.

"I fear the present state of the Middle East is an object lesson of how seldom intelligent ideas work out in practice. All Mark Sykes' ideas were intelligent, but not one has worked out. Notwithstanding the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the French are running or trying to run Aleppo and Damascus, and the Arabs have lost the independence we promised them; Cilicia is Turkish; the Armenians are either dead or homeless; and the Zionist Jews only kept alive by our bayonets. Horrible (1922)."

Lord Howard de Walden wrote of his earliest friend finally:

"So the one man that I had met who seemed to me to have in him the seeds of greatness was not to attain after all. A number of the heavily broidered dreams, which are boyhood's work and drape the chambers of the heart, were torn down very suddenly, and the walls of life looked uncommonly bare and dusty. I know I felt that God had probably withdrawn him rightly because he was too good to waste on our foul times. We journeymen are enough for the present greasy scuffle, and Mark was no journeyman. I don't know how to express that indefinite quality of Mark that made him different. Perhaps I can put it best in terms of those animals, which were always our curious background, the racehorse. I have met many men of my own age in all walks of life. Many were better men, many were abler, many with greater function and greater feeling, many with less. The best of us were decent class handicappers. I honestly think a few pounds would have brought us together. But with Mark it was different. I knew when we were fourteen as I know now that he was more than a stone better man than I was myself. It seems that he died only yesterday. Yesterday he was greater than a mountain; to-day he is less than a shadow. I wish, but the time is past for wishing, and I will end as I used long since: DEAR MARK, —Yours affectionately,

"T. E. ELLIS."

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